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A HAT-TUB TALE

WHERE TUCK HAD HIS LITTLE HOUSE ON THE BAY OF FUNDY

A HAT-TUB TALE

OR

ON THE SHORES OF THE BAY OF FUNDY

By CAROLINE D. EMERSON
Author of "A MERRY-GO-ROUND of MODERN TALES"
With Illustrations by LOIS LENSKI

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	A Shipwrecked Mariner	3
II.	The Great Sea Gulls	21
III.	The Smell of Fish	37
IV.	A Mermaid	51
V.	Charley Farley's Store	65
VI.	Pirates	79
VII.	Captain Thomas Foolhardy	95
VIII.	The Weir	101
IX.	Nip's New Hat	119
X.	The Moose Hunt	139
XI.	Missing the Moorings	157
XII.	Treasure!	171

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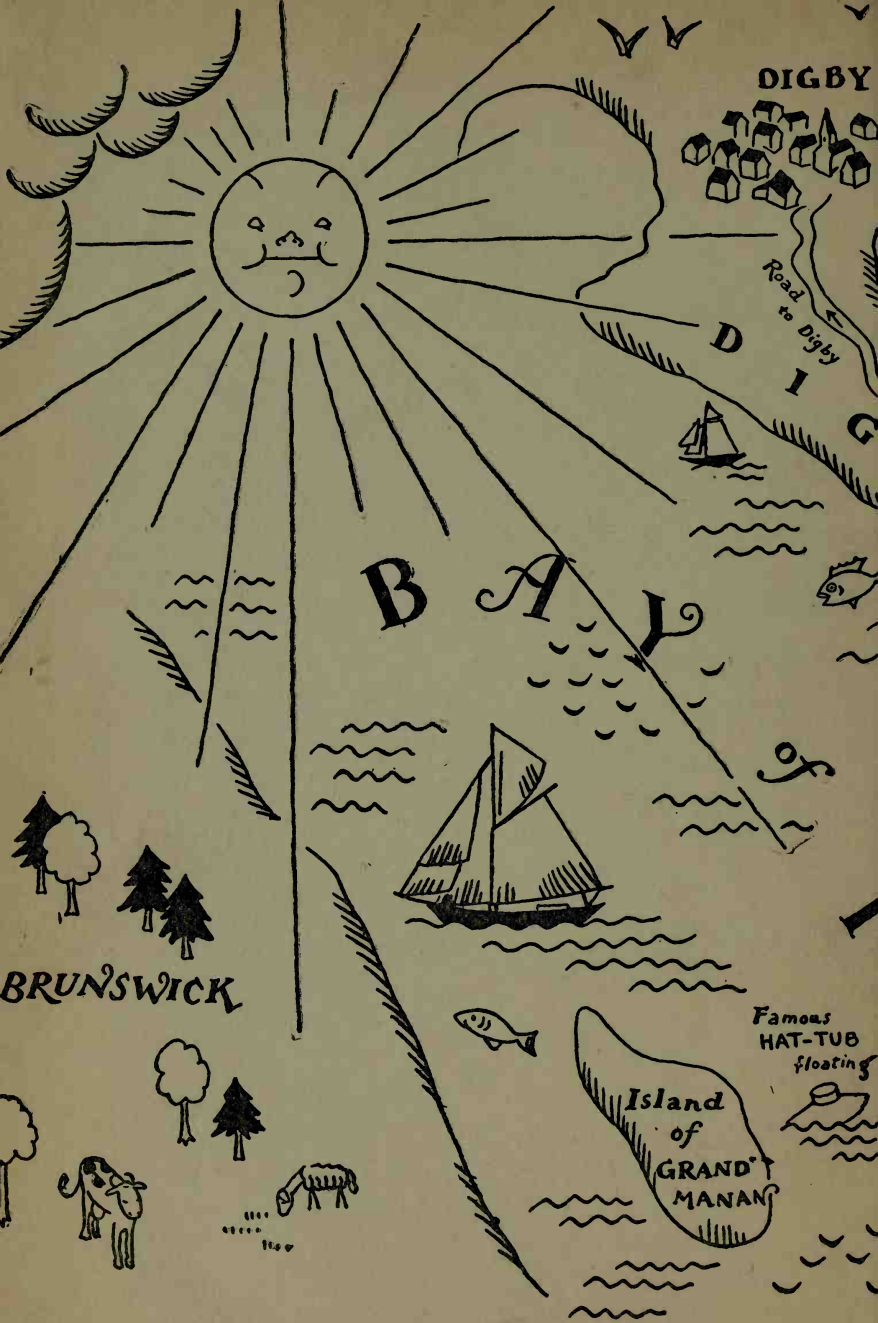
DIGBY
Road to Digby
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of
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Famous
HAT-TUB
floating
Island
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GRAND
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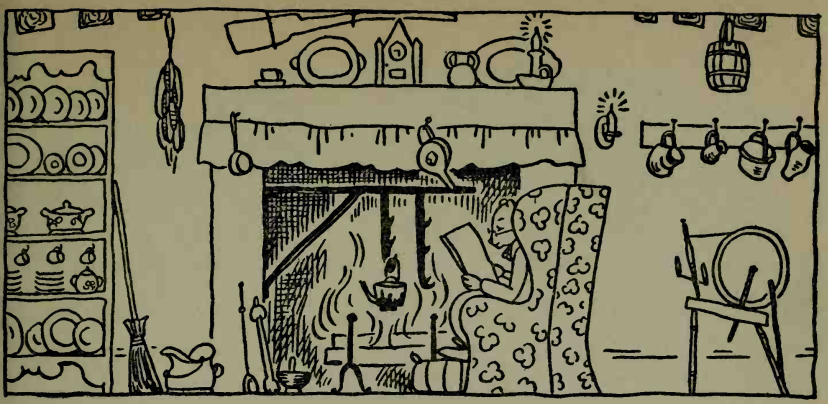
This Way to the UNMAPPED INTERIOR
Blue Nose Express
TRAINS to Yarmouth
MARY'S BAY
Weir
Charley Farley's Store
Home of the ANIMALS
Home of Widow Jones
SPOT where PIRATES landed
CAVE
Petit Passage
PIRATE SHIP
FRENCH COAST
Light-house
HARK!



CHAPTER I

A SHIPWRECKED MARINER

ONCE there was a funny little animal and his name was Tuck. He had one paw like a spoon and one paw like a fork and he lived on salads. He was the only little animal like himself in the whole wide world so that you can see that he was very, very lonely. He lived all by himself way up in Nova Scotia, on Digby Neck beside the Bay of Fundy.

Tuck raised his own salads in his own garden. He dug in his garden with his spoon paw and he raked in his garden with his fork paw and he grew most beautiful salads. He had a pouch in front of

him specially made to carry his salads from his garden to his house. It had a flap and a button so that nothing could fall out. But salads are no good for company and Tuck was very lonely.

While he worked in his garden, the great sea gulls circled in the sky above his head. Down they would swoop around him; then off they would fly, out over the great cliffs, up into the blue sky, and away off across the Bay of Fundy. Tuck often stopped his work to watch them. He would sniff the salt breeze from the sea. He would envy the great flying birds with their white backs and their wide grey wings. But the sea gulls were too full of their own affairs to stop and visit with him. They were no good for company. Tuck would sigh and turn back to his lonely task.

He had a cunning little house to live in. At the end of his day's work, he would pick himself a salad for his supper and put it in his pouch. Then while the sun was setting all red and gold out over the Bay of Fundy and the sea gulls were flying home to their cliffs for the night, Tuck would walk slowly back to his lonely little house.

He was a very neat little animal so he always

washed his paws carefully before he put his supper on the table. He used his spoon paw and his fork paw to mix his salad dressing. A spoon paw and a fork paw are very well planned for mixing salad dressings and Tuck had his own favorite recipe. Then he would eat his lonely supper and sit by his lonely fire. The wind blew about his house and the waves beat against the cliff, as the tide came in and the tide went out on the Bay of Fundy.

The only thing that most people know about the Bay of Fundy is that it has the highest and the lowest tides in all the world. The tide rises forty feet and the tide falls forty feet twice every day of its life, so you can see that that means there is a great deal of coming in and going out.

When the tide was in, it came way up to the cliff where Tuck had his little house. When the tide went out, he had to walk across a wide stretch of sand to reach the water. Forty feet up and forty feet down went the tide, twice every day of its life. But tides are no good for company, for all their coming-ins and going-outs, and Tuck was very lonely. He would sit on the great white cliff and watch the tide come in and go out. He wished that it would bring

him a companion. But no companion did it bring him.

There were people on the other side of Digby Neck. There was a store and a little village of white houses with gay gardens around them. But Tuck was suspicious of people and he kept away from them. You see he was the only one of his kind of animal in all the world and he knew it. He was afraid that some one would try to collect him for the Natural History Museum or the Zoo. So he kept himself to himself.

At night Tuck would sit by his lonely fire. The flames would light up his copper pots hanging on the wall. When the clock on the mantel struck ten, he would roll out his hat-tub and take his bath.

Now before the days of white enameled tubs, and before the days of painted tin tubs, and before the days of any bath rooms at all, people took their baths in front of the open fire in their hat-tubs. A hat-tub was large and round and it was shaped like an enormous tin hat. The crown held the water and the brim caught whatever might splash over. So every night at ten o'clock Tuck would roll out his

hat-tub and take his bath. Then he would fill his hot water bottle and scramble into bed.

One night as he lay in his little bed, he listened to the wind whistling and roaring without. There was a bad storm raging out on the Bay of Fundy. The wind shook the little house. The wind screamed and it whistled.

"Pity poor mariners at sea on a night like this," sighed Tuck as he settled himself under the covers and tried to sleep.

But it was nearly morning before the wind died down.

The next day was clear and bright. The waves

were high, but otherwise there was no trace of storm. Tuck went down to the beach to see what had been washed ashore. Almost everything that he needed around the house was washed ashore sooner or later. This morning he picked up two kettles, a double

boiler and a tin tray. What he really needed was an egg beater and he wandered along the beach looking for one.

Suddenly he saw something black bobbing about in the water. It appeared to be a small trunk or a large suit case. The waves were dashing it back and forth. Tuck stood looking at it and wondering what to do. In, in, it would come on the crest of a wave. Then back, back would go the wave and the chest with it. Back and forth, in and out rolled the chest. It was so large that Tuck did not think that he was strong enough, all alone, to pull it up on shore. So he stood watching it.

All at once the chest gave a jump quite of its own accord. Tuck was so surprised that he ran out to the chest without thinking what he was doing. He hated cold water and he was usually very careful not to get his feet wet. But this time he waded right out into the water and gripped the chest with all his might. He was so excited that he scarcely knew what he was doing.

"There must be something alive inside," muttered Tuck. "That chest couldn't jump about of its own accord!"

But it was no easy matter to get the chest away from the hungry waves. He pushed and he pulled. He ran in and out with the surf. At last he managed to shove the chest way up on the beach. He threw his weight against it and braced his paws in the sand. Out went the wave, tugging at the chest as it went. Tuck struggled with every ounce of strength that he had. The sand was slipping from beneath his feet. His back seemed to be breaking, but he held onto the chest. Out went the wave. The chest was left high and dry. But in no time at all another wave would be back. Tuck pulled the chest and he pushed it until, at last, he tugged it safely out of reach of the water. Then he lay down on the beach beside it, so tired that he could do nothing but hang out his tongue and pant for breath.

Suddenly the box turned over of its own accord. It had a sign on it which said "THIS SIDE UP. HANDLE WITH CARE." Tuck had pulled the box in on the wrong side. Whatever was inside did not like it and "it" had hopped "itself" over. Tuck forgot how tired he was. He sat up, looking at the box in amazement.

The question was what to do next. The chest

was fastened with a great lock and two clamps. Whatever was inside might be very dangerous, or it might be very precious! Tuck scratched his head with his fork paw and tried to make up his mind what to do. What was inside the chest might be the companion for whom he had so often longed. On the other hand it might be—well, it might be almost anything!

"Whoever or whatever is in there," thought Tuck, "I can't just let him die of cold and hunger. I wonder if he or she or it will speak to me."

He put his mouth to the key hole.

"Can you hear?" called Tuck.

No answer.

"Are you there?" he tried a second time.

"Where do you suppose I am!" snarled a very cross voice.

"Would you like to get out?" asked Tuck.

The chest gave a jerk as if it were impatient. It hit Tuck who was leaning down with his mouth to the key hole. He tumbled over backwards onto the sand. It almost seemed to him as if the chest had meant to do it. He could glimpse one bright

eye looking at him through the key hole. He brushed the sand off his coat.

"Why don't you answer me?" he asked.

"You don't ask anything worth answering," came the grumpy voice from within.

Tuck was quite taken aback. Whoever was inside the chest did not sound pleasant to him. It might prove to be a companion, but he did not want a bad companion. There are worse things, he felt, than living alone.

He ventured one more question.

"How are you feeling?" he asked.

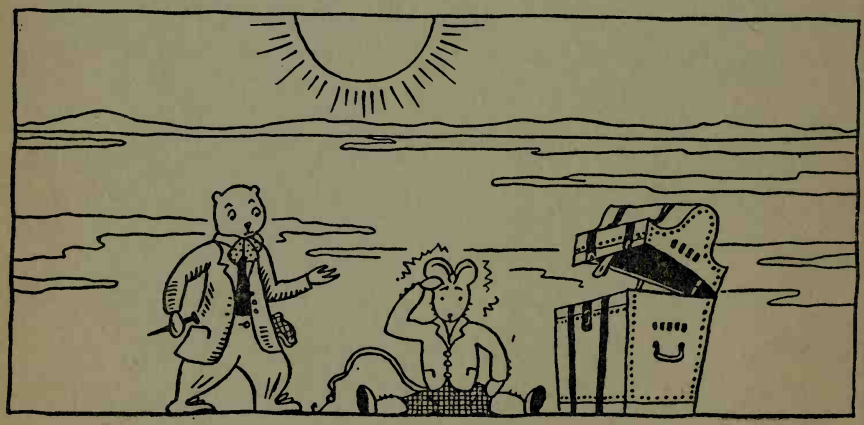
Now he could not have asked a less tactful question. Whoever was in the chest gave three squeaks of anger and jumped the chest up and down several times.

"How do I feel?" he cried in a high and very cross voice. "*How do I feel?* How would you feel if you had been bounced about all night in a chest? And now if you aren't going to do anything but stand around and ask silly questions, I wish you would GO AWAY! I'm cold and I'm wet and I'm hungry. I don't care about being met with a reception committee. GO AWAY!"

Tuck was overcome. He saw how thoughtless he had been, and, as he was a very kind-hearted animal, he turned to at once to try and help matters.

He ran to the house for the ice pick. When he had found it, he ran back to the beach as fast as he could go and fell to work upon the lock. It was hard working with a spoon paw and a fork paw that were never meant for that sort of thing. Finally he forced the lock open. Then he pried back the clamps. The top of the chest was free. He stepped back to see what would happen next.

Slowly, slowly the cover of the chest was raised. A small head and two very snappy black eyes looked out and inspected Tuck.



"Well," grumbled the same cross voice, "you certainly were slow!"

Tuck's feelings were hurt. He had worked as hard and as fast as he could. He was tired and discouraged. Nothing that he did seemed to please his visitor. This was not the kind of companion for which he had longed. He had expected, at least, thanks for all the trouble that he had taken. No thanks did he get from this strange, new little animal.

The newcomer climbed out of the chest and shook himself.

"Is this a desert shore, or, by chance, is there any food about?" he inquired.

Tuck ran to his garden and picked a bunch of his best salad. He came back with hope in his heart that this would please his guest. It did not!

"What's the bouquet for?" the new animal asked gloomily as he sniffed at the salad. "Is somebody going to sing?"

Tuck's feelings had been hurt before. Now he was angry.

"Nothing I do seems right," he said as he turned

away with his salad and walked slowly back to his house.

But he sat outside on the cliff and watched.

The strange, new little animal seemed not to notice his anger. He shook himself as dry as he could and then rolled over in the warm sand. After that he evidently felt better. Tuck watched him stroll down to the sea. He limped as he went and he was plainly stiff and sore from his trip in the chest. Tuck's anger softened.

"He is cross, but he certainly has something to be cross about!" Tuck said to himself.

Now the new little animal was not like any other animal that Tuck had ever seen before. Instead of a spoon paw and a fork paw he had four paws just like anyone else, but he was very fond of fish so he had a fish hook on the end of his tail!

Tuck watched the new animal go down to the shore. He watched him put his tail in the water. A minute later and out came the tail with a fine, fat fish on the hook. The stranger gobbled it up while Tuck had scarcely time to see what had happened. Then back went the tail into the water for more fish.

Tuck forgot all about the little animal's rudeness. Indeed Tuck was so amused that he came down to the beach again. One, two, three, four, five, six fishes were quickly caught and as quickly eaten.

"That's a convenient thing you've got there," he commented to the newcomer.

But the owner of the fish-hook tail had just caught his seventh fish and he was too busy eating it to answer.

"May I take the liberty of asking who you are?" asked Tuck.

"No you may not!" answered the little animal tartly. "And don't take any more liberties either!"

Tuck felt depressed. He began to feel that there are worse things than living alone. He watched the newcomer catch and eat his eighth fish.

But now the new animal had eaten all that he could possibly eat. He climbed to a dry spot on the sand to warm and sun himself. Slowly the cross expression on his face changed to a pleasanter one. He stretched himself and yawned gently. His manners and his temper had begun to improve.

"And what is your name?" he asked in what was quite a polite tone.

"My name is Tuck," his companion answered.

"Well," said the new animal, "I have only a long Latin name that no one can pronounce. But since you're Tuck, you might call me Nip. How's that?"

The newcomer laughed comfortably. Tuck began to think that perhaps he was not such a bad companion after all. Tuck invited him to come up to his house, and the two of them, Nip and Tuck, trotted up the path together.

Tuck longed to know more of his guest's story, but Nip was tired and he felt it better to wait.

That evening by the driftwood fire Tuck asked Nip to tell the story of his life. Nip was delighted to talk about himself. There was no subject that interested him more. Indeed, if anyone else began to talk about himself, Nip usually yawned and went to sleep. But first he remembered to thank his host for saving his life, for Nip's manners and his temper

had improved decidedly since his arrival, although I will have to confess that they were never any *too* good.

"I'd have been dead of cold and hunger by now," he said with great feeling, "if it hadn't been for you."

"I certainly am glad that I came along when I did," said Tuck.

"Yes," continued Nip, "it was one of the few lucky things that has happened to me in all the hardships of my hard life."

He gave a great sigh.

"Could you tell me a little about them?" asked Tuck.

Nip gazed into the fire for some minutes and then he blew his nose on his bandana handkerchief, wiped away a tear, and began.

"My home was in Siam," he said. "I am from Siam. You must be sure to get the accent right. Never say, 'I'm from Siam.' That's all wrong. But if you say, 'I AM from SIAM. From SIAM, I AM,' that comes out right. Do you see?"

"Yes, I think so," replied Tuck.

"The next important thing about me," continued Nip, "is that when only a child, I was an only child.

That was a hardship on us all. We lived in the jungle, just below the monkeys and just above the elephants."

"It must have been a lovely place for a child," said Tuck.

"Well, it wasn't always so lovely!" exclaimed Nip. "Particularly after those men began coming around."

"Did the men capture you?" asked Tuck.

"They lured me to their camp with some chocolate candy they had there," said Nip. "I'd never had any candy before, you see, and I liked the taste of it. I was too trusting. I went right up to them for more candy. Suddenly they caught me and popped me in that chest and carried me off."

Nip watched the fire dreamily. His anger was

passing and he was growing very sleepy. He started to give a great yawn. Then he remembered the hardships of his hard life and he managed to turn the yawn into a deep sigh.

"After a while we were on a big boat," Nip continued, "and the men used to let me out of the chest. I climbed about the boat for exercise. But there was a cat on board. Do you like cats?"

"I never knew one intimately," said Tuck.

"Well, I say they're horrid beasts!" said Nip. "That ship's cat couldn't take a joke. I'd tease her a little and she'd go off like a sky rocket. Then the men would say it was all my fault and shut me up in that chest again."

Nip gazed into the fire. He stretched his toes to its warmth and gave a little chuckle of content.

"Wish that cat could see me now!" he mused. "I've got more fish inside of me than she'll get in a year!"

Nip gave another yawn. This time he was too sleepy to try to cover it.

"Yesterday that cat made trouble again and they put me in the chest," he continued. "You know the rest. The storm came up. The chest was too near the

edge of the deck. A wave washed me overboard and there was I being buffeted about all night. And—" Nip gave another great yawn. His head began to nod. "I—suppose—that cat's—glad——"

Nip was fast asleep. Tuck started to push his chair over to the bed.

Nip woke up enough to mutter, "You—were—of—great—service to me,—you were—Tossed about all night in a chest! No way—to—treat an orphan!" He snored softly. "Well—that cat—she's in the pickle jar—if—they—ever—find—her." He was sound asleep.

Tuck lifted him across onto the bed. He put a hot water bottle at his feet and tucked him in cosily. Then Tuck blew out his candle and settled himself in his own little bed. The night passed peacefully in the little house on the shores of the Bay of Fundy.

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT SEA GULLS

THE next morning Tuck invited Nip to stay and live with him in his little home and Nip accepted his invitation. So the two of them lived together and, on the whole, things went very well. Tuck did all the housework, for Nip proved to be rather lazy. But Tuck did not mind, for, if he did the work, he could have everything just as he wanted it. He was a good housekeeper and wanted things just so.

There was very good fishing in the Bay of Fundy. Nip spent all his time down by the sea. He smoked

his pipe, and he read his paper, and he hung his tail in the water. When he felt a bite, he would pull in his tail and take off a fine, fat fish. But the water in the Bay of Fundy is cold and Nip was used to a warmer climate. Sometimes he caught colds from sitting with his tail in the water all day long. So Tuck knit him a warm red muffler.

"Wrap it tight around your neck," Tuck ordered.

After that Nip had no more colds, at least not when he remembered to wear his muffler.

But Nip was absent-minded. At times he even forgot about the tides on the Bay of Fundy. Up, up, up would come the tide, forty feet up. Sometimes it would come up around Nip and he would never notice it until, all of a sudden, he would find that he was sitting right in the water. Then he would go up to the house, wet and very cross. Tuck would give him a hot bath in the hat-tub and put him to bed.

One day it was more serious than that. A big fish bit just as the tide came in. It pulled so hard that it pulled Nip off the rock and into the water.

The fish swam for the open sea. Nip paddled for shore for all he was worth. For several minutes it was

a question which of the two would win. Then Nip managed to get his head enough above water to shout.

"Help! HELP!" he cried.

Tuck heard his calls. He rushed to the beach and grabbed Nip. The two of them together were stronger than the fish and they pulled the fish in, instead of the fish pulling Nip out, which was fortunate for everyone except the fish. After that, Tuck kept a rope tied around Nip, to pull him in by as the tide came up.

But one day, one sad day, Tuck forgot to tie the rope around Nip. This is what happened.

Out on the cliffs lived the sea gulls. Tuck made friends with them. They flew around him when he worked in his garden and ate the bugs and worms. They did not like salads so they left his salads alone. But they did like fish. They adored fish and they could never, never get enough to please them.

Down on the shore sat Nip catching fish and eating them all by himself. The gulls would swoop down around him. They would flap their great wings, and they would beg and beg and beg for just a little fish. But not one bite would Nip give them.

He was as greedy as he was lazy and *he liked to tease!*

Sometimes he would offer them a fin or a tail of a fish, but that only made them the angrier.

"He's a greedy fellow!" screamed the sea gulls as they flapped their great white wings and flew out over the Bay of Fundy.

They cried and they moaned to each other, and they all agreed that Nip was a greedy fellow. Then they flew back to see if they couldn't get him to give them just one little fish.

"Here's a nice, fat one," said Nip, with a naughty gleam in his small, black eyes.

Down swooped a young she-gull, but, just as she was going to snatch the fish, Nip gobbled it up himself. The gulls cried with rage and flapped their great wings. This was too much for them! Down flew the biggest of all the gulls.

"We have had enough of this!" screamed the gull. "You have done nothing but tease us all the morning. Now you shall pay for it!"

Down flew the great gull. He picked up Nip in his great claws. Nip struggled to get free.

"Help! HELP!" he shouted.

Tuck ran to the door of the house. He saw Nip eing carried off by the gull. He reached for his rope. ut that morning, *of all mornings*, he had forgotten o tie the rope around Nip. There was nothing Tuck ould do to help. Away flew the gull with Nip in is claws. Tuck sat down on his door step in despair.

When the sea gull was tired, he deposited Nip pon a deserted rock and left him there. Nip was ar from home. He was feeling quite ill from his apid flight through the air. He could not swim. He id not see how he was ever to get back. He was horoughly unhappy!

The sea gull circled about in the bright blue sky rying to his friends. After awhile he flew back to he deserted rock.

"Now see here," said the sea gull firmly, "you're oing to live on this rock and catch fish for me every lay."

"I'm going to do no such thing," said Nip, but e said it very softly to himself so that the sea gull id not hear. He was lazy and he was greedy. He vas stubborn too, and he was not going to let anyone make him work.

All day long Nip sat on the deserted rock. He

put his tail in the water, *but he curled up the fish hook underneath.* Not one single fish did he catch.

The sea gull flew around in the air, and waited, and waited, and waited.

"Haven't you caught any fish yet?" asked the sea gull.

"Not a one," said Nip very patiently.

The sea gull gave a sigh, and flew off across the water, and up into the sky. A little later he flew back.

"Any bites?" asked the sea gull.

"Dreadfully sorry," said Nip, "not a bite. It's fisherman's luck, you know. You just have to take what comes or what doesn't come."

And what came was just nothing at all!

The next time that the sea gull flew down to see if Nip had caught any fish, Nip pointed to another rock a little nearer the shore than the one upon which he was sitting.

"Fish don't seem to bite here," said Nip. "How about trying that rock over there?"

"All right," agreed the sea gull and he picked up Nip and carried him to the next rock.

The new rock was nearer home. Nip was pleased. He sat with his tail in the water, but he kept the fish hook curled up.

"Any fish?" cried the sea gull.

"Not a one," sighed Nip. "They simply don't bite here. How about that rock over there? We might try that."

"Very well," said the sea gull.

He carried Nip to the next rock which was still nearer to the shore. Nip was delighted. His little game was working well.

But the last rock was a very small rock. Nip had not counted on the tide. It began to come in. Higher and higher rose the tide. Smaller and smaller grew the dry spot on the top of the rock. Nip had to sit all scrunched up. He could hardly keep out of the water. He watched anxiously for the gull to come back.

But just as Nip thought that the next wave would wash him away, the tide turned. Nip gave a sigh of relief. He almost forgot about the gulls. He started to put his tail in the water, but he remembered in time, and jerked it out.

When the sea gull came back, Nip said to him, "You nearly lost me, leaving me on a little rock like that!"

But the sea gull did not seem to care!

"Any bites?" was all the gull said.

His patience was near an end.

All day long Nip sat on the rock and did not catch any fish. As evening came on, Nip ventured to suggest that the gull move him to still another rock. He pointed to one that was much nearer to the shore. The gull flew down to pick him up.

Just then a young sea gull flew past.

"Don't you do it!" screamed the young sea gull. He saw the trick. "He's not catching any fish on purpose and he's just getting you to carry him nearer and nearer to the shore. Don't you let him play his tricks on you!"

The old sea gull paused in his flight to look back over the rocks. He saw that what the young gull had said was quite true.

"Oh fiddlesticks," muttered Nip. "Why did that young thing have to come muddling in my affairs!"

The old sea gull snatched up Nip and he carried him way, way out over the ocean until he could

scarcely see any land at all. Then the gull set Nip down upon the most deserted rock that anyone has ever seen, and left him there.

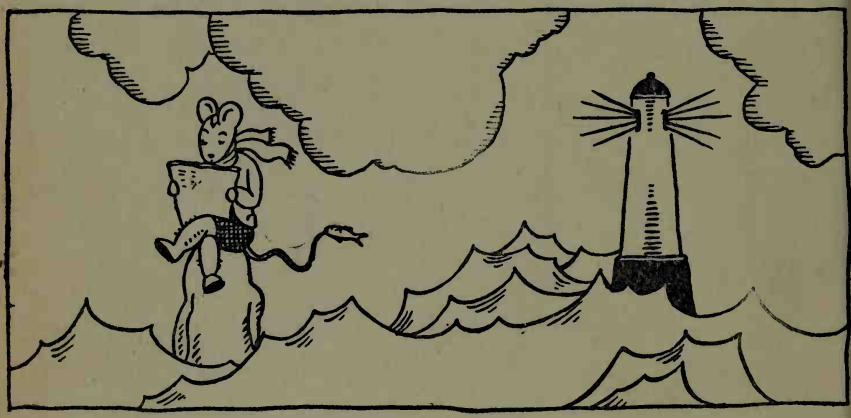
It was a terrible moment for Nip. He was discouraged. But he settled down on the rock to try to make the best of a bad situation. It was quite dark now. The sea gulls were flying home to bed. Nip was left quite alone.

Suddenly a light flashed across his rock. It flashed again and again. All would be dark for a minute. Then flash, flash, flash would go the light. It was the light from a nearby lighthouse. Nip decided that things were not going to be as bad on the deserted rock as he had thought.

By the light of the lighthouse, Nip caught enough fish for his supper. He even found that he could read the headlines of his paper which he had fortunately brought with him. He had not had time to read it yet and he was eager to see what had happened that day. He knew what had happened the day *after* and he wanted to know about the day *before*. That was the way Nip's papers came.

You see the people who had lived in the house before Tuck moved in, had saved all their papers.

They had left them stacked in one corner of the kitchen. Nip took them off the pile one at a time. He began at the top and he was going right through the pile. It made the papers come backwards but Nip did not mind. We think we have to know each day what happens *next*. Well, Nip was interested to know what happened just *before*. It is just a differ-



ence in your point-of-view. Everyone has a right to his own point-of-view.

So out on the lonely rock sat Nip, reading his paper, and eating his fish.

The next day it was the same thing over again. Nip sat on the deserted rock, but no fish did he catch for the sea gulls and no fish did he intend to catch.

His paper was old. He had read it through once, so he tried reading it upside down. But he grew very tired of it.

Now back on the mainland, in the little house, sat Tuck, very sad. He did not know where to hunt Nip and he did not know what to do. He rolled the hat-tub up to the highest point on the cliff and set it on end as a signal. He knew that if Nip should glimpse it, he would know that in that direction lay home. Tuck sat by the hat-tub all day watching and hoping for some sign of the lost one. It was in vain.

At last Tuck called all the gulls together to talk matters over with them. The gulls flew down from the sky and made a great circle on the beach around Tuck. They listened politely to what he had to say.

Then the old sea gull who had carried Nip off to the deserted rock, told their side of the story.

"Nip is greedy," said the sea gull. "He never gives us a bite of anything. Even now he's sitting out there on a deserted rock, reading his paper through upside down, and refusing to catch even a herring for us. It's an outrage!"

The sea gulls all flapped their wings to show that they agreed.

"Nip is a greedy fellow," they said.

"You are quite right," said Tuck with a deep sigh. "Nip must learn better ways. He has been thinking only of himself and not of others. He is having just the lesson that he deserves."

The next day Tuck persuaded a young sea gull to carry a new paper out to Nip. At the top of the paper he wrote,

TELL GULLS YOU WILL FISH FOR THEM ONE-HALF HOUR EACH DAY THIS SEASON. I NEED YOU BADLY. WE ARE ALL WELL HERE BUT MISS YOU. LOVE, TUCK.

Nip was very glad to hear from home, and he was very glad to get the new paper. He was lonely and he was tired of that rock. *But he did not want to work half an hour a day for anyone.* He sent back a message by the sea gull which ran,

HALF AN HOUR TOO LONG. HOW ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES. LOVE, NIP.

Tuck called all the sea gulls together. He told them what he had suggested to Nip and the answer which had come back.

The gulls rose in an angry swarm of great flapping, white wings. They flew way out over the Bay of Fundy and they screamed and they cried to each other. They came back to say that they thought Nip was a greedy, lazy fellow, and that, unless he would catch fish for *one whole hour* each day all summer, they would never, never, never bring him back!

Sorrowfully, Tuck wrote another message. He thought a long time before he wrote it, and he looked at the sea, and he looked at the sky to see what the weather was likely to be. The sky was black and the sea was growing choppy. The outlook was bad. He read his message over and then gave it to the sea gull.

TWENTY MINUTES NOT ENOUGH. GULLS DEMAND A WHOLE HOUR. ADVISE GIVING IN. STORM BREWING. LOVE, TUCK.

The gull carried the message to Nip, who was growing very chilly out on his desert rock. The

waves were getting larger and larger. The wind whistled drearily. He was miserable. When he read the message he was even more miserable.

"Is this the very best you can possibly do for me?" he asked the gull.

"The very best!" said the sea gull. "You'd better give in."

"Nonsense," muttered Nip, but just then a great wave broke over his deserted rock. The cold water trickled down his neck.

"What about it?" asked the sea gull. "I must be getting home. This is the last call."

"Very well," growled Nip. "I agree."

He was too cold to care what he did. He only wanted to get home.

Down swooped the gull and picked up Nip. He carried Nip home in his claws and put him down on his own doorstep. Tuck was delighted to see him and he gave him a good hot bath in the hat-tub. Soon Nip was warm and comfortable in his bed.

The next day Nip began to fish for the gulls. One hour every day of the week he fished for them all summer long. He grumbled and he growled about it, but no good did it do him.

"It is much better for you to have a little something to do for other people each day," Tuck assured him.

"It IS NOT," muttered Nip as he started for the beach. At every step he snapped, "Rubbish!" or "Nonsense!"

Tuck decided it was better not to hear. He went out to his garden to work.

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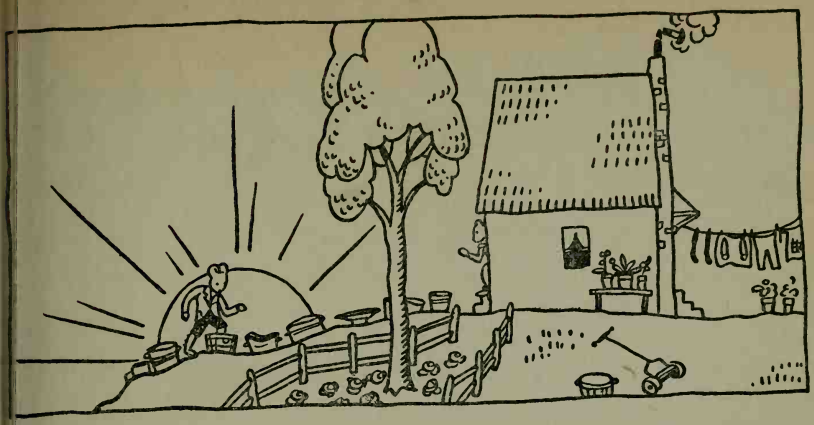


CHAPTER III

THE SMELL OF FISH

TUCK did not like the smell of fish. After awhile he told Nip that he *must not* bring any more fish into the house. He made Nip eat out on the beach and he made him wash his hands before he came home.

But still there was always a smell of fish about the house.

Tuck cleaned house and put everything out to air. It did no good, for this is what was happening. Every night Nip would hide some fish under his bed to eat if he woke up during the night and was hun-

gry. He was much too old for this sort of thing, but he would do it.

Tuck put an extra basin just outside the house door for Nip to give his paws a final wash before he came in. No good did it do! The smell of fish still filled the house. Then Tuck put out the hat-tub and made Nip take a bath before he came into the house. The smell of fish continued.

Tuck got another tub and another basin and several new kinds of soap. Soon the line of tubs and basins stretched from the house to the cliff, each with a different kind of soap beside it. There was the hat-tub, and then a foot-tub, and then a folding tub that kept folding up with Nip in it, and a sitz-tub, and every kind of tub that Tuck could find.

It took Nip so long to bathe in each tub that he had to stop fishing early in the afternoon to reach the house before dark. Tuck had to stand at the door and watch him all the way. If Tuck turned his back for a minute, Nip would skip a tub. You could never trust him to be thorough.

But still the smell of fish continued.

Tuck cleaned house all over again. This time he found a fish under Nip's bed. It had been overlooked!

ne night before when Nip had eaten his mid-night nch.

"I understand at last," said Tuck to himself, as e shook his head sadly over Nip's misdeeds.

Just then Nip came in at the door. But it did not em to be a good moment to mention the fish to him r Nip was furious. Tuck had tried a new soap that ay and it was so strong that it had taken off most f Nip's hair. He had left most of his hair behind im in the sitz-tub and he was furious.

"Now just look here and see what you have gone nd went and done!" he sputtered.

Then he caught a glimpse of himself in the irror and lay down on the bed in despair. He cer-ainly was strange to look upon. Tuck was very sorry or what he had done, but he could hardly keep from aughing. He ran around making Nip as comfortable s he could. He rubbed cold cream into the bald spots.

Nip had to stay in the house for several days. The gulls kindly fished for him. They brought him is three meals a day. They were very polite and hey said they hoped his hair would soon grow out.

"The gulls would never have been so kind if you ad not fished for them," said Tuck.

"Rubbish and nonsense," was all that Ni grumbled.

But, as he lay in his bed, he thought things over He decided that this question of the smell of fis must be settled, once and for all. These tubs an soaps and things were getting on his nerves. H would have no hair left if this kept on much longe It had got to stop. He must cure Tuck of his dislik of the smell of fish!

Nip stretched and turned over in bed. He ha thought of a plan. It was a rather naughty plan an he should never have thought of it, much less carrie it out. But Nip smiled to himself and went to slee

Now you remember that Tuck had his spoon pa and his fork paw for digging in his garden and f mixing his salad dressing. He also had a pouch i front of him in which he carried his salads from h garden to his house. It was the pouch which cause the trouble. That night while Tuck was sleepin Nip crept across the room. Very carefully he unbu toned the flap of the pouch. Then he slipped a litt fish inside. He buttoned the flap and then crept bac to his own bed. He even chuckled to himself. H was pleased with what he had done.

When Tuck woke up the next morning, *he smelt fish.* He smelt it everywhere he went. It was no wonder for where ever Tuck went, the fish went with him, in his pouch. But he did not suspect that. He started to clean house again. He hunted under Nip's bed, but no fish did he find there this time.

"Where can that fish smell come from?" sighed poor Tuck. "It grows stronger as the day goes by and it seems to follow me about."

He was at his wits' end. He lost his appetite and could eat nothing. He had no heart to work in his garden. He picked no more salads and so he did not open his pouch. He never thought of looking inside of it.

Down by the shore sat Nip, smoking his pipe,

reading his paper and catching more fish. He did not mind the fish smell. He liked it. He could see Tuck, up at the cottage, scrubbing the floors and shaking the rugs out of the windows. Nip was not sorry at all for all the trouble that he was making. Indeed he was quite pleased with himself.

When Nip went up to the house, he found Tuck lying on the floor, all tired out. The smell of fish was worse than ever. Tuck was discouraged.

But that night Nip made matters still worse. He had no business to behave as he did! While Tuck was asleep after his hard day's work, Nip crept across to him. He unbuttoned the pouch. He took out the fish that he had put in there the night before. Then he tucked in a bit of salt fish in its place. He buttoned the flap quickly and slipped back to his own bed. Now fresh fish may smell, but salt fish is far worse as you will learn if you walk down by the fish houses on the shores of the Bay of Fundy. Nip chuckled at his trick and Tuck, unsuspecting, slept on.

The next day the fish smell was worse than ever. Nip should have been ashamed of himself but he was not! He was delighted with the way things were

vorking out. But when he came home at noon, a surprise and not a pleasant surprise awaited him.

Tuck met him at the door.

"I can't stand this," he said with tears in his eyes. "*I'm going to move!* The smell of fish around this house is worse than ever. I'm going away."

Now Nip had no wish to move. He liked the Bay of Fundy. But this matter of fish must be settled and settled once for all. Nip too was having his troubles. The last soap that Tuck had bought for him was orange cure soap. It made Nip's hair grow out so long that he kept tripping over it.

Nip sat down beside Tuck to discuss the matter.

"There's really nothing in this except your imagination," said Nip firmly. "You've thought of fish and you talked about fish until you can't think of anything else. Everytime you look out of your door, you see those tubs and everytime you go shopping you buy a new soap. You've thought so much about fish, *why you even smell of fish yourself!*"

"Yes," groaned Tuck fanning himself, "it seems to me as if I should never be free from it as long as I live. I'm going to hunt up a house in the desert and eat dates!"

That did not sound like a good suggestion t
Nip. He had no intention of living in a desert an
eating dates. For one so fond of fish, the desert ha
no charms. He hastened quickly to reassure his com
panion.

"Oh no," he said, "I wouldn't think of that. It
quite unnecessary to move away from here. You wi
be quite all right if you will just do what I say."

"I'll try!" promised Tuck.

"Well first of all you must stop thinking abo
fish," said Nip. "You must forget that there ever w
such a thing as fish. We must take away all the
tubs and get rid of all this soap. I don't know ju
what to do with it. I'd throw it into the sea only
hate to think of what it might do to the fishe
We'll bury it. Then you must forget all abo
fish."

Tuck promised to do his best. They buried t
soap and they rolled away the tubs and put them o
of sight. They kept the sitz-tub for baths, but Tu
put the hat-tub down by the shore to use as a bo
when he went out deep-sea fishing. By night pea
had settled down on the little house by the shores
the Bay of Fundy. When Tuck slept, Nip took o

the salt fish from the pouch. The next morning he asked Tuck whether he could smell any fish.

"No," said Tuck as he sniffed cautiously, "I don't think I can."

"You see!" cried Nip. "It was all your imagination!"

That night Nip put a bunch of lavender into Tuck's pouch. The next morning there was no trace of fish smell about the house. Instead the soft fragrance of lavender followed Tuck about.

Nip was very pleased with himself. He departed for the beach. He was so sure that his plan had worked that he laid aside a pile of fish to hide under his bed to eat that night.

But up at the house Tuck was not as happy as Nip was picturing him. As the afternoon wore on, he kept feeling a tickling. He scratched and he fussed, but it would not stop. Finally he opened his pouch and looked inside. There he found the lavender. It was the sprig of lavender that had been tickling him. He pulled it out and he sniffed at it.

Slowly he realized what had been happening. Nip must have put the lavender in his pouch! Before the lavender there had been fish,—fish every-

where. Tuck began to understand what had been happening.

He decided to do nothing but to wait and to watch.

The smell of fish came back into the house!

Nip was bringing up fish as usual and hiding them under his bed. He was much too old for that sort of thing, but he did like a bite to eat in the middle of the night.

Tuck waited a little while and then one night he lay awake. For a time Nip slept quietly. Then he began to toss about. The moon was shining in the window and Tuck could see quite clearly. At last Nip sat up. He gave a great yawn, and then he reached under the bed for fish. One fish after another he munched. No wonder there was a smell of fish in the house! Then he wiped his mouth on the sheet and turned over to go to sleep.

"I shall have to do something about this," thought Tuck. He too could think of plans.

The next evening when Nip came in to the house to slip his fish under his bed, Tuck watched him.

"Would you mind getting me a log for the fire?" he asked Nip.

Nip did mind, but he grumbled and went out after the wood.

While he was away Tuck took the fish from under the bed and threw them away. In the place of the fish he put two large, round green things.

Back came Nip with the wood. He had no idea of what had taken place and Tuck did not mention it. The two of them sat by the fire until ten o'clock. Then they took their baths and filled their hot water bottles and went to bed.

The time ticked passed. At midnight Nip woke up. He began to think of fish and of how much he wanted some. Then he sat up in bed. Down went his paw to find a bit of fish. But he could find nothing. He leaned over and began to reach about in the darkness. Nothing could he find. He reached still further. Then suddenly, instead of Nip's getting his fish, a pair of sharp claws gripped him.

"OW-OW!" howled Nip, jumping up and down on his bed. "Le'go there, you!"

He jumped out of bed and a second crab fastened onto his hind paw.

"What is the matter?" asked Tuck. "Can't you sleep?"

"Oh, oh, OH!" cried Nip. "Get this old thing off me!"

He was hopping about the room. A dark object was clinging to his front paw and another one was clinging to his back paw.

"Imagination," said Tuck firmly. "It's nothing in the world but your imagination. You ought to put

your mind on other things. Go back to your bed and sleep."

But Nip had just managed to pull a large green crab from his front paw. He limped over to the door and threw the crab out. Then he pulled off the other crab.

"Imagination—nothing—" he muttered as he climbed back in bed.

The next day they talked matters over. Nip was sulky and his paws were sore. He was quite cross, but

e finally promised not to bring any more fish into he house, except at meal times. It was Tuck's house nd he did all the housework. It was only fair that e should have things as he wished.

CHAPTER IV

A MERMAID

WHEN winter comes on the shores of the Bay of Fundy, it grows cold and stormy. They don't fish much except for lobsters. Nip put out his lobster pot and every day he would catch a fine, fat lobster. This diet fitted in well for both of them. In winter Tuck could no longer grow salads in his garden, so he ate lobster salad instead. He grew sleek and fat.

During the long winter evenings, the two of them would sit in front of their driftwood fire and make hooked rugs for the city trade. Nip hooked them with

his tail. At least Nip would start a rug, but he would soon grow sleepy. Then Tuck would step around behind him and pick up the work. Nip became so used to having Tuck hook rugs with his tail that he would wake up if Tuck stopped. So the long evenings passed.

The winter was half over and things were going nicely in the little house on Digby Neck. One fine day Nip went out in the hat-tub to pull in his lobster pot. The hat-tub was very useful for deep sea fishing.

This day the lobster pot proved to be heavy.

"Goodness," thought Nip, "have I caught a whale?"

He pulled and he pulled until he finally pulled the lobster pot to the top of the water. He peeked in through the bars. *He had caught a mermaid.*

Nip was so surprised that he nearly tipped over backwards out of his hat-tub. But he steadied himself and peeked again. The mermaid had fainted from fright. Her sweet, little face was pale and her sea-green hair was washed across it. Nip felt dreadfully sorry.

He pulled her into the hat-tub and paddled for home as fast as he could go. Tuck was away so Nip

arried her up to the house alone. He put her on the ed, built up a roaring fire on the hearth, and put hot water bottle on her tail. Still she did not come . He threw cold water into her face.

Suddenly the mermaid opened her eyes. Then she t up. She gave a queer, little cry. She looked wildly bout the room. Then she reached down and took the ot water bottle off her tail. She threw it away from er as far as she could throw. Then she sat on the ed, rocking herself to and fro. She sobbed and she ried.

"There, there," soothed Nip tenderly. "Please on't cry. I'll do anything you say!"

It made him feel dreadfully to hear her. He ooked about in despair for something to amuse her. He found a little handmirror and he gave her that. She liked it and she stopped sobbing and began to ook at herself in it.

Her hair was rather mussed up so Nip handed er a comb. The mermaid began to comb out her ong, green, sea-weed hair. It was in a bad state and Nip soon took a hand to help.

The mermaid's hair was all full of enchanting, ittle sea animals. As she ran her comb through it,

out tumbled sea urchins and snails and periwinkles and star-fish. Nip ran around picking them up as fast as he could. They were splendid for bait and he soon had enough collected to last a week! The mermaid thought it was fun to watch him scramble. She forgot her fright and began to laugh.

Just then Tuck came home. He was very much surprised at what he found awaiting him. The house was rather wet and he slipped on a jelly fish as he entered, but he felt that Nip had done well. He praised him for the care that he had taken of the little mermaid.

She was feeling quite at home by now. She looked the house over and peeked into everything. She laughed and she played with Nip and they had a jolly time of it.

But Tuck began to be troubled about what they were going to do with the little mermaid. She did not show the least desire to go back to the sea. She was enjoying herself thoroughly. After supper, Tuck suggested that Nip walk out on the cliff with him, that they might discuss in private the best thing to do.

So out the two of them went, leaving the mer-

aid playing with the copper kettles on the floor. uck kept the kettles so brightly polished that she ould see herself in them. She was holding the littlest ne in her arms and looking down at her reflection i it. Then she rocked it back and forth as though were a baby. Nip and Tuck could hear her singing o it as they walked away.

They walked and they talked, but they could not ecide what they should do. So absorbed were they, hat they did not notice how dark the evening was rowing and that storm clouds were covering the sky. uddenly a splash of rain made them look up, and ney saw with alarm that a heavy shower would soon e upon them. They turned and scampered for home, ut they had walked farther than they had realized. he rain began to beat about them. They ran as fast s they could, but it was some time before they eached their home. When they finally did, things ere not as they had expected to find them.

When they had wandered off down the cliff, they ad left the little mermaid playing on the floor. Now he was used to living *in* the Bay of Fundy where he water is very cold. She began to grow more and nore uncomfortable by the fire inside the warm room.

She opened up the doors and the windows. A coo breeze blew in which pleased her.

Then came the storm. The wind whistled through the house. The rain beat against it. The little mermaid was delighted. The cool, delicious air and the rain were refreshing to an overheated little mermaid. She liked it. The rain poured in the windows. Ou went the candles. The floor was fast becoming a pool, the fire hissed and sputtered, and then it to gave up and went out. The little mermaid swan around and sang for joy.

Meanwhile Nip and Tuck came hurrying hom along the cliff. They battled with the storm an twice they lost their path. At last they groped thei way to the house.

"Why isn't there a light in the window?" calle Tuck in surprise.

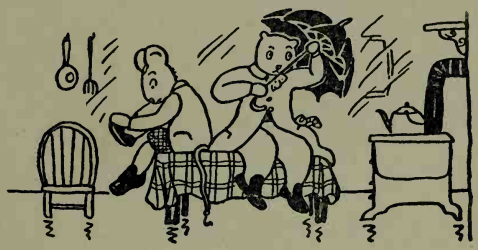
"The front door is wide open!" shouted Nip fo answer. "Help me get it shut."

But the wind was too strong for them. The pulled and they pulled, but they could not get th door shut. They gave up and stepped inside. Splas went Tuck in water up to his knees! Nip wade

round after him. There was not a dry spot in the ouse.

The little mermaid had no idea of the trouble hat she had caused them. She thought that they vould be as pleased as she with the change. She wam about singing a strange, sweet song. She chased ier tail like a kitten. But for the time she had no harms, not even for Nip.

The two animals spent the night on a little shelf



over the kitchen stove. It was the driest place that they could find. They put up an umbrella, and they put on their rubbers, and they spent a miserable night of it.

Morning came at last. The house grew light and the sunlight showed that the storm had cleared. Nip and Tuck, on their shelf, began to stretch their

cramped bodies. Below the little mermaid was floating on her back, fast asleep. Nip and Tuck climbed down from their shelf. They were stiff and sore. They had had the most uncomfortable of nights. They began to mop out the house.

The little mermaid woke up. She wept when she saw them throwing out her nice water, but Nip stopped working and played with her. She was soon laughing again. Tuck cooked her a good breakfast, though it took him a long time to get the fire started. When she had finished, he said firmly that it was time for her to go back to the ocean. Indeed they were both very firm. They did not ask her whether she *would like to go back to the ocean.* They said that she *had got to go.*

But the affair was not so easily settled. The mermaid had had a pleasant time with them. She had grown fond of them. She did not want to go back to the ocean. She had no intention of going back to the ocean. Nothing that they could say made any difference.

Nip and Tuck would not take *no* for an answer. Kindly but firmly they took the little mermaid between them down to the beach. They said good-by

t her, but she would not swim away. They turned teir backs and walked off. They expected to hear r dive into the water, but she did not move. She st on the rock and she sobbed and she cried. Her autiful, sea green hair fell over her little face. She ept as though her heart would break.

Nip and Tuck were miserable, perfectly miserle. But there seemed to be nothing to do but to alk back to their little house. They paused now id then to look at the little mermaid, but she only sbbed the louder.

"Can't you think of something to do?" begged Nip.

But Tuck had no plan to suggest.

All day long it was the same thing. There on the ck sat the little mermaid and cried as though her art would break. It seemed as though she had the hole sea to draw from for her tears. The tide came i and the tide went out, and still she sat, and still e sobbed.

Finally Nip could stand it no longer. He gave up id went to bed. As usual that left Tuck to arrange fairs. After much careful thought, Tuck decided on this plan.

The mermaid had been happy before they found her. She would doubtless be happy again if she would only go back to her ocean home and forget them. But if she were going to keep on like this, they would have to sell the house and leave. Tuck decided to begin packing. When the mermaid saw what was going on perhaps she would leave. If she went, then he would unpack and settle down again. If she did not go, then they would have to hunt a new home.

Tuck brought out all their boxes and trunks. He worked as hard as he could. Then he nailed the covers on the packing boxes. At each stroke of the hammer, the little mermaid cried the louder. It almost broke his heart to hear her.

Then he nailed up a sign.

Tuck told Nip to get up and dress. The two of them made a final round of the house. They put out the fire. They locked the windows. The mermaid watched them and she cried the harder.

Then they took their umbrellas, locked the door and started off. The tears rolled down their cheeks. They could hear the sobbing of the mermaid.

Suddenly the crying stopped. The two friends stood still in the middle of the path and listened

There was silence on the beach; no sound save the lapping of the waves. Then they heard soft voices talking. Next came a splash, and then another splash. A little laugh of delight, more soft voices, and then all was quiet again.

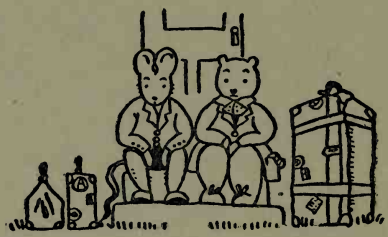
Tuck crept back through the bushes and peeked.

The mermaid was gone. There was no sign of her except for a rippling line along the water. Another line of ripples ran close beside it. The mermaid had not gone alone!

Joyfully Tuck called to Nip. They would not have to move after all.

"We'd better sit down on the step and wait for a few minutes," said Tuck. "She might come back."

So they sat side by side on the front steps and watched the ocean, but there was no trace of the little mermaid. Then, as the sun set over the Bay of Fundy, they opened their house. Tuck put the blue and white checked curtains back in the windows and hung up his copper pots on the wall. He set the table with pewter plates and flowered mugs and the two friends sat down for supper. Just before they went



to bed Tuck remembered to go out and take down the sign.

"They might have sold the house right over our heads, while we slept," he said. "It's lucky I remembered to get it down!" Nip was too far gone to worry. He was already sound asleep. It had been a hard day.

But this was not the end of the little mermaid, oh no! She came back often to see them and she brought a very jolly merman with her. She seemed happy in

ıe water now, and she never tried to live with them gain. Tuck named her "Evangeline," after a lady ho used to live in those parts. They called the mer- ıan "Henry."

Later on they came back with several adorable ıerbabies. Tuck sent hurriedly for all the latest ooks. He used to sit down on the beach and read)r. Holt's "Care and Feeding of Children" aloud to Evangeline. The little mermother listened to every ord of it and the merchildren came on nicely.

They were darling little things tumbling about he beach. Tuck made the rule that they must not ome into the house, but he loved to play with them n the sand. It frightened him to have them swim ut into such deep water, but merbabies can swim ong before land babies can walk. They were quite ble to take care of themselves.

Tuck was very proud of the children!

CHAPTER V

CHARLEY FARLEY'S STORE

OVER on the other side of Digby Neck there was the little village of fishermen's cottages. Each cottage was tucked away in its own little yard. There was a white fence around each yard and the gardens were full of flowers. In the middle of the town was the general store. It was kept by Mr. Charles A. Farley but everyone called him Mr. Charley Farley so I shall do the same.

Tuck traded at Mr. Charley Farley's but he always paid for everything that he took, in salads. Nip could have paid in fish but he was much too lazy.

He could not be troubled with catching the extra fish. It was the chocolate candy that tempted Nip. He did like his sweets! Now and then he would stroll out of an evening when the village was all asleep. Tuck was always worried until he got back.

"Where have you been?" Tuck would ask.

"Oh just looking at the stars," Nip would answer.

Tuck was very much afraid that 'looking at the stars' meant looking in at places where Nip had no business to be. Then came the night when Nip went out to "look at the stars," and did not come home. Tuck had reason to be worried and he was.

It was about ten o'clock when Nip crept out of the house and decided that he would go over to the village to see what he could see. It was a clear, beautiful night. Nip went straight to the store of Mr. Charley Farley. He pressed his nose against the glass. He could just see in. There was a glass case that ran the length of the store. It was full of chocolates. Nip could almost smell them.

He trotted around to the back of the store. He poked at several windows, but they were all locked. Then he sat down under a tree to think. Suddenly

ıe noticed a small window quite high up. It had been eft open. There was a shed roof just under it. By ›utting a box on end he could just reach the hed.

Nip found a box from the pile behind Mr. Charley Farley's store. It was just the right height or his purposes. He pulled it around to the shed. Then he climbed up. From the roof of the shed he ould easily reach the window. He peeked in. All vas black inside. He wondered whether to climb hrough and explore.

At this point Nip knew that he should have urned his nose around and followed it straight home o bed. Tuck always said, "If your nose is pointing in he right direction, you can't do better than to follow t." But Nip's nose was pointing in exactly the vrong direction. Unfortunately he decided to follow t. He crept through the window.

At first he could see nothing but boxes. Slowly is eyes grew used to the dimmer light. He poked bout trying to find a box that was opened but none f them were. All the crates and boxes in Mr. Charley Farley's store room were tightly nailed. Nip ave a disgusted little grunt and climbed on over

the boxes. Suddenly the floor beneath him ended. Nip came within a hair's breadth of pitching head first into the main part of Mr. Charley Farley's store. He caught hold of a box and just saved himself. He discovered that he was not in a real attic but only on a narrow loft which ran across one end of the store. He had come suddenly to the edge of the loft and had nearly fallen over.

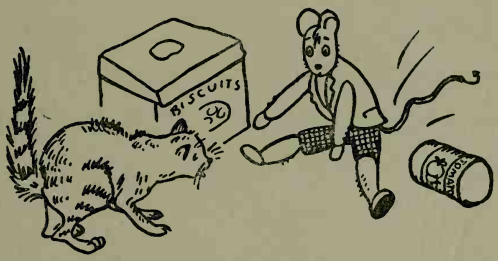
"Now, that's mighty dangerous to leave things that way!" grumbled Nip. "I might have fallen over. They've no business not to have a railing."

He sat on the edge of the loft and hung his hind paws over. The moon shone in the plate glass windows so the store below was lighter than the loft had been. Nip could make out the dishes of chocolates in the glass show case. The candy was all arranged according to flavors. Nip began to lick his lips and to wonder what the different flavors were. But how was he to get down?

During the day time the men climbed to the loft by means of a long ladder. But the ladder had been left leaning against the shelves and it was of no use to Nip. If he was going to get down to those chocolates, he clearly saw that he would have to jump.

Nip edged along the loft looking below him for good place to land. He chose a dark spot on the unter. He let himself down as far as he could and n dropped. It was a dreadful feeling. It was soon be worse. Nip landed upon the Charley Farley re cat. She had been asleep on the counter in the adow of a biscuit can. She slept no longer.

To drop on a cat is like dropping into a volcano.



ip bounded two feet into the air with his mouth ll of fur and his eyes full of fireworks. He would ve preferred to stay in the air but gravity pulled m down. The cat clutched and clawed him without rcy.

Nip gave a great lunge. He and the cat rolled f the counter together. Now Mr. Charley Farley d left the flour barrel open by mistake. Into the rrel went Nip and the store cat. Flour flew in

every direction. Then out of the tempest leapt tw white figures. Without stopping for anything, eac climbed to the top shelf; one went to the side o the store where the dress goods, hairpins, and sus penders were kept; the other to the side of the stor where the canned goods, soap and baking powde were neatly placed in rows. There was a scatterin of dress goods, hairpins, suspenders, canned goods soap and baking powder.

The two white figures were both sneezing as har as they could sneeze. The air was full of flour an lost tempers. When the sneezing quieted down, th two white figures sat and glared at each other acros Mr. Charley Farley's store.

"You'd better watch out where you step!" hisse the cat.

"You'd better watch out where you claw!" snarled Nip.

"You spoilt my night's sleep!" hissed the cat.

"You've spoilt more than that for me!" growle Nip.

Nip gave himself a shake and the flour flew through the air. Both started sneezing again which at least stopped the conversation.

When the sneezing stopped, Nip started to climb own. There seemed no reason for staying on the top self and glaring at the cat any longer. He had had ough of this night. He wished that he was at home id in bed. He was sore and lame and he climbed own slowly.

"I always hated cats," muttered Nip gloomily.

Nip decided to start for home at once. He had lst his taste for chocolates. He gave himself another sake to remove as much flour as possible from his r. Then he looked around to see how he was to get t of the store. But it was one thing to drop into r. Charley Farley's store and it was quite a differ- t thing to get out of it.

The loft was high above his head. The shelves d not run as far back as the loft. The ladder was to heavy for him to move. There seemed to be no ay of getting up to the loft. He tried running and mping, but it was no good.

"Wait until Mr. Charley Farley finds you!" ssed the cat.

"Oh hush up, there," answered Nip.

"You ought to have thought of this before you opped down on top of me," hissed the cat.

"Keep still!" growled Nip.

It was bad enough to think of what Tuck woul say to him, without having that cat lecturing hi too!

Nip made a tour of all the windows and door They were all locked and not one could he ope He worked at the front door, but the key was home in the trouser pocket of Mr. Charley Farle There was no hope there.

The moon had set and it was growing darke There seemed to be nothing to do but to curl somewhere and wait for morning. The clock stru two. Nip listened for the cat to make some u pleasant comment about the time but no sound can from her. She had been licking the flour out of h fur. It had made a paste and the paste had qui clogged up her hiss.

"That's one good thing," sighed Nip.

He curled up in a bean sack and tried to slee But he kept thinking of Tuck. What would Tu say when he found out that Nip had been poki about in other people's premises? What would M Charley Farley say when he saw his store with t

bur and canned goods all about, and his store cat l clogged up? Nip tried hard to forget and to go sleep.

But when he did drop off to sleep, he dreamed. uck was standing in front of him and pointing at m in the bean sack. He grew smaller and smaller nd smaller until he was no bigger than a bean and t mixed in with the others. Mr. Charley Farley as just going to sell him, when Tuck saw him in ith the beans and—Nip woke up shivering.

He turned over and tried to sleep again. But this me he dreamed that Mr. Charley Farley was open- g the door and the cat was sitting up on the top elf and telling all the dreadful things that Nip ad done. Just as Mr. Charley Farley was coming ward him, the telephone bell rang. Mr. Charley arley stopped to answer it and Nip was just dash- g for the door— He woke up. The real telephone ell was ringing and Nip was still in the bean sack ith no hope of escape. It was morning and a very reary morning for him.

Nip looked at the Charley Farley store clock. It as seven. The store would open at eight. He

climbed out of the bean sack and stretched himself. The cat woke up and stretched herself. She could only speak in a hoarse whisper this morning.

"One hour more," croaked the cat.

Nip made a dismal round of the store. All windows, all doors were tightly locked. Suddenly he saw some one moving past the window. He ducked quickly behind the lard pail. He waited to hear the key in the lock and to hear the door open. There was a scratching sound but no key. Nip peeked out from behind the pail.

There was some one poking around the window. The cat gave a startled hiss. It was no one she knew. Nip peeked again. It was Tuck, come to find him! Nip withdrew behind the lard pail. He was very ashamed to have Tuck see him. He could not decide what to do. Then the clock struck half after seven. That helped him to make up his mind.

He crawled over to the window, making the most of his stiffness and his soreness. Tuck was very relieved to see him. He waved to him and beckoned to him to come out. Nip only shook his head. He put his lips close to the plate glass window.

"Can't get out," shouted Nip.

"How'd you get in?" called Tuck from the other side of the plate glass window.

Nip pointed to the back of the store. Tuck ran around in that direction. It was easy for him to see how Nip had entered the store, for the box was there leaning against the shed.

Tuck climbed up quickly. A minute later and he

was looking down from the loft on the upset store; on Nip with some fur missing and much flour in his hat; on the cat, who was making desperate efforts to wash herself. It was a sad sight.

"What have you been doing?" asked Tuck sternly.

Now it was no time to ask Nip questions. His temper was always short. This morning he had almost none.

"Having a birthday party," growled Nip. "Wha do you 'spose?"

The cat laughed. It was more than Nip coul stand.

"If you're going to sit up there on that loft an ask me silly questions down here," he snapped a Tuck, "I wish you'd go home!"

Tuck saw that it was no time to reason with Nip He also saw that it was quarter before eight and h knew that Mr. Charley Farley opened store at eight He paid no attention to Nip's rude remark.

"Climb up as high as you can, and see if I ca reach down to help you," he ordered.

There was a pile of breakfast foods on th counter. Nip climbed upon it. He reached up as fa as he could. Tuck reached down. They could almos touch.

"Get down and put another package of break fast food on the pile," said Tuck.

Nip scrambled down and added a package o Quaker Oats and a package of Cream of Wheat t the pile. Then he climbed up again. He could jus reach Tuck's spoon paw and fork paw. He gripped them as tightly as he could. Tuck gave a great pul

Nip gave a great jump and up he went. There was a minute's struggle. Then, there sat Nip on the edge of the loft.

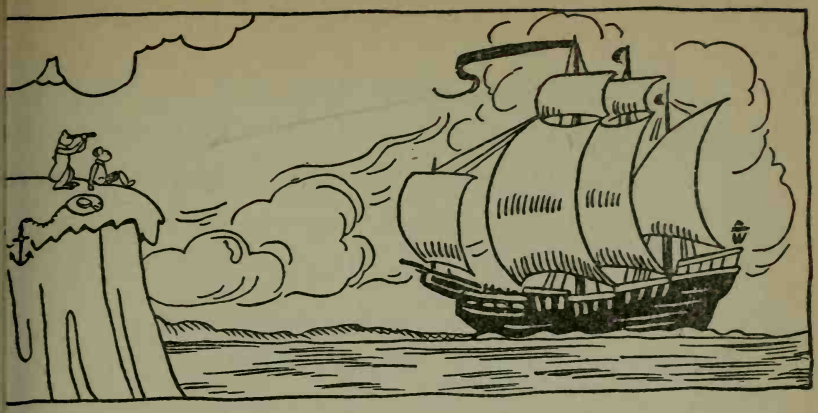
But in making his jump he had upset the pile of breakfast foods. They went rolling about the store. The clock struck eight. Mr. Charley Farley's key could be heard in the lock. Nip and Tuck crept quietly back through the loft and ran for home.

When they reached the little house on the cliff on the shores of the Bay of Fundy, Tuck had a serious talk with Nip. As a result Nip went every night for a week and carried his best fish to Mr. Charley Farley. He was paying for the damage that he had done.

In Nip's eyes there was only one pleasant thing about these trips with the fish for Mr. Charley Farley. Nip left them just outside the door of the store. He left them so that the smell was carried in to the store cat through the key hole. She adored fish as all cats do. Nip knew that she could not get out of that store. He had tried it himself. The fish was safe from her, but she was not safe from the smell of the fish.

The cat would walk up and down inside the

plate glass window. She would lash her tail and meow for fish. Nip would sit down on the step and eat just one fish to show her how good they were. Then he would make a deep bow and leave for home. Nip did not tell Tuck about the cat.



CHAPTER VI

PIRATES!

ONE fine day a mysterious, full-rigged ship came sailing up the Bay of Fundy.

"Get your spy-glass and come up on the cliff," called Tuck, as he hastened out of the house.

All day long they watched her hovering near the shore. She tacked and re-tacked and did all these things which a ship ought to do. The tides came in and the tides went out. Night came on and the ship lay to.

Nip began to complain.

"I'm getting sleepy," he said. "Let's go home."

Tuck covered him up under the hat-tub where he was soon fast asleep. Tuck stayed up to watch the ship by the flare of the northern lights.

Suddenly, in the early morning, he saw a small boat being lowered from the side of the big boat. Tuck grew excited. What was going to happen?

The sea gulls were still asleep, but he routed out

one of them and urged him to fly to the ship to gather news. The gull started off drowsily. He soon dropped off to sleep again on the crest of a wave and that was the last that Tuck saw of him. There was evidently no help from sea gulls.

Tuck strained his eyes to see in the dim light. He could just make out that the little boat had reached the water. Then three figures climbed down the side of the big ship. One figure seemed to be hav-

ng great trouble and the other two helped him. Then he little boat started across the water for the hore.

"There's no good coming of this!" muttered Tuck.

He poked Nip to tell him the news, but Nip nly grunted. Tuck pulled the tub down more closely ver Nip so that he would not be cold. Then he ran uickly down the cliff to the beach. He hid behind pile of driftwood and waited, watching every move f the little boat.

Nearer and nearer it came. There was no sound ave the drip of the oars and a faint jangle of chains.

"Pirates!" thought Tuck. "There's no good comng of this."

As the boat came nearer, he could see it more learly. Two men pulled at the oars. A third sat in he middle of the boat, gazing sadly at the shore head.

The boat grated on the sand. The first oarsman eapt ashore. He lifted out a water cask and a bisuit cask and set them upon the shore. Then the econd oarsman climbed out. The two of them asisted their sad companion to rise and to land. He

was bowed with sadness and there was a jangle of chains at every step he took. Tuck's heart went out to him in pity.

The two oarsmen led the prisoner to the water cask and the biscuit cask and they set him down on the sand between the two casks. There was a final jangle of chains.

Then the first oarsman wiped his brow and started his farewell speech to the helpless victim before him. Tuck crept nearer that he might not miss a word.

"You've come to this bad end, mind ye, through your own stubbornness!" growled the oarsman. "*Tom Foolery* we've called you and you've earned it for a name!"

The speaker had a red handkerchief about his head, and wore a red sash from which hung a cutlass and a spoon ladle. It was plain to see that he was the pirate cook.

"You've come to this bad end, Tom Foolery," repeated the pirate, "and you've nobody to thank but yourself! Two years you've been a-lying around that ship in chains, a-cluttering up the decks and no good to nobody!"

"I couldn't help it," moaned the sad youth in hains.

He laid his head down upon the biscuit cask in espair.

"Oh come, couldn't you?" scoffed the second irate.

But the first pirate went on.

"What good's a cabin boy, I'd like to know, who's o hung over with hardware that he can't move with- ut jangling?" he asked. There was no answer to at question so he ended with, "The Cap'n and the ew's been tripping over you for two years in fair eather and foul. We're through with ye!"

The prisoner only moved his head from the bis- uit cask onto the water cask.

"I tell you I couldn't help it," he whispered.

Tuck longed to give the poor chap a word of omfort, but he dared not show himself as yet.

The pirate cook continued his speech.

"Here's your biscuit cask," he said, "and here's our water cask and here's your deserted shore. hat's all we can do for you! The captain never eant ye to stay in chains for two whole years."

"Tom Foolery, you'd a-been free long since,"

said the second pirate, "if you hadn't gone and lost that key. You can't get chains off if you've got no key to unlock them, can ye?"

"I've hunted everywhere for it," sobbed Tom Foolery.

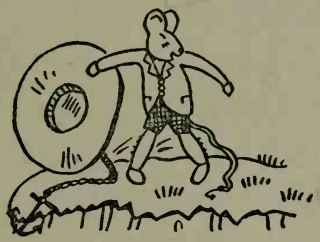
"It was stubbornness to lose that key," said the pirate cook, "just plain stubbornness as I sees it!"

The two pirates turned on their heels and started for their boat. They were through with Tom.

But just then, way up on the cliff where Tuck had left him, Nip had a bad dream. He was cuddled up under the hat-tub and he was getting stiff. He gave a strange little cry for he thought that he was back in Mr. Charley Farley's store. The pirates, on the beach below, stopped and looked up at the cliff. They did not like to hear queer noises on this deserted shore. They did not know what it all might mean.

Nip repeated his cry. Then all of a sudden, he rose up under the hat-tub. He had a cramp from lying still so long. As he rose, the hat-tub tipped upon its side. For a second it balanced, big, round and black against the pale sunrise. The pirates could scarcely believe their eyes.

For a second the tub balanced. Then it began to
l. It rolled right down the cliff toward the beach
ow. Down the path it plunged, straight for the
ates.



The two of them dashed into the water, shoving
ir dory off as fast as they could.

But the pirates did not wait for it to arrive.

"Custards-and-cod-fish-cakes!" shouted the pirate
ok, "Man the boats!"

On, on came the tub. It was making straight for
em.

"Catch it, oh please somebody catch it for me!"
iled Nip from the top of the cliff. He was afraid
at he would never see his tub again.

The pirates thought that he meant to catch them.
ey scrambled and pushed their boat all the harder.
nally they got it afloat. The cook rowed as hard
he could, but the second pirate had only been able

to get half in. He hung over the back of the boat kicking like a propeller.

Tuck stepped quickly out from behind his wood pile and saved the tub. No one noticed him for they were all too busy with their own affairs.

Now out on the big ship, the pirates had been watching what was happening on shore. They had seen the great, round black thing plunge down the cliff towards the dory. They were feeling very uneasy about this deserted shore. It was not their idea of the way things should be on a deserted shore.

The pirate captain tramped about his boat, shouted to the sailors to hoist the sails and make all ready. He wanted to get started as soon as possible. But Tuck noticed their preparations.

"Not so fast there," said Tuck. He had other plans. Tuck ran along the beach until he came to the place where the merpeople slept.

"Evangeline, Henry!" he called. "Come quickly, I need you."

Merpeople sleep lightly. Evangeline and Henry answered his call.

"Do you see that ship?" asked Tuck. "It's a pirate ship and they have deserted one of their men

our beach. They've no business to treat people
ıt way! Do you think you could keep her from
ling away until the tide goes out. She'll be left
h and dry in an hour or two."

Evangeline and Henry were delighted with the
a. They were sure that, with the help of the other
rpeople, they could hold back the ship. They woke
their little merboys and little mermaids and all
ir friends. They all went swimming out to the
ate ship.

"I'll teach them to play their pirate tricks on
se shores!" muttered Tuck to himself.

The merpeople reached the big ship just as the
tle dory pulled up beside it. Henry tickled the
s of the pirate who was acting as a propeller. The
ate howled as only a pirate can. He scrambled up
rope and onto the big ship with record speed.

There was a light wind and the sails of the ship
re all set.

"Heave-to the bowsprit and haul up the lugger,"
uted the captain, or some such words. (I'm not a
faring man myself and I may not have them
ht.)

The sailors heaved and they hauled at every-

thing on board. The ship was ready to start, but sh
did not start. To the surprise of all on board sh
stayed still. In vain did the pirates call on their ca
tain, in vain did they fall on their knees, it was
no avail. The boat would not move. No longer cou
the helmsman steer the ship. No longer would h
sails carry her. She stayed still. But the tide did n
stay still. It went out, out, out!

"Drop anchor!" shouted the captain. "We'
aground."

"He doesn't need an anchor to keep him whe
he is," thought Tuck in amusement.

But it kept the crew busy and they ran abo
deck falling over each other in their eagerness. T
captain continued to tramp about the deck and t
to think up other things for them to do.

Out, out, out went the tide. Forty feet down
went. First the ship rested on bottom. Then as t
water became lower, it began to tip. Out, out, o
went the tide. The boat lay on her side, helple
Evangeline and Henry and all the merpeop
laughed and went home to breakfast.

Now the captain and the pirates were in a s
state. They did not dare to leave the ship. Too ma

tange things had been happening. But a ship rest-
ig over on its side is not a comfortable place to be.
Ie captain could no longer tramp about and shout
lers. He was clinging to the railing trying not to
l off. The crew were hanging like laundry from
e yards and the masts. The ship rested upon her
le, left high and dry by the tide.

Tuck thanked the merpeople, and then he turned
s attention to the boy who had been left upon the
ach. To his surprise he found Tom Foolery sitting
and looking much happier. He was watching the
rate ship and he seemed to find its plight amusing.
e was chuckling to himself.

Tuck did not want to frighten Tom. He felt that
had had enough for one night.

He called out softly, "Ship ahoy, matie, this is
friendly craft."

Instead of being afraid, Tom Foolery was only
o glad to have someone to talk to. Tuck sat down
side him on the sand.

"Look at that there boat," chuckled Tom.
They've beached her. I always said they couldn't
n that boat without a cabin boy!"

"They're having troubles," admitted Tuck.

"Troubles, I should say so!" exclaimed Tom. "People don't think much of us cabin boys till they try to get along without us. They can't even get her out of port without me."

Tuck did not mention the merpeople. He was interested in Tom and he urged him to go on talking. Tom was quite willing.

"Two years I've been in chains," said Tom, "two

whole, long, blessed years! Nobody knows the hardships I've seen. And it was all because I lost that key. The others said I meant to lose it. But I never did. I couldn't help it!"

"Have you looked everywhere for it?" inquired Tuck.

"Yes, I have," said Tom sadly, "and they all said I'd lost it on purpose, so I wouldn't have to run any more errands. No one's given me a kind word for two years. Now they're gone off and left me on this

serted shore. Only," he added more hopefully, hey don't seem to be getting on so well as they ought they could without a cabin boy."

Tom Foolery looked out across the sands to where e ship lay helpless upon her side with the crew nging on as best they could. He winked at Tuck.

"Yes, I see," said Tuck a bit drily, "but the most portant thing for us to think about is this, *have u really looked through all your pockets for that y?*"

"Everywhere, afore and aft," sighed the boy.

"Let me look," said Tuck firmly.

"You can try, but it's no good," said Tom.

Tuck was used to looking through Nip's pockets hen he lost his pipe. He started in with Tom at e north-east corner. First he searched above the quator and then below. He got lost once and had make for the home port and start over again.

Tuck laid everything that he found in the ockets out on the beach. Soon the sand around oked as if there had been a recent and serious ship-reck. Things were pretty thick in one pocket. Tuck nt one of the gulls, who were awake by now, to tell ip to come down from the cliff and help him. ip came down, sleepily, rubbing his eyes. He did

not know what had been happening, but the sea gul explained matters on the way down.

"You look through that pocket and see if you ca find a key," said Tuck.

Nip started on the search.

"It's no good," sighed the cabin boy. "I've looke through them all. I'll never be rid of these chain till I die!"

But Tuck had nearly reached the bottom of back hip pocket. He had pulled out six nails, a safet razor blade, a small comb, a pocket dictionary, water pistol, three sharks teeth, and—there was stil a hard object at the bottom of the pocket whic would not come out. Tuck pulled and pulled at th lump. Then Tuck took hold of Tom and Nip took hol of the lump. With a great pull, they finally wrenche it free. It sent them all tumbling over on the san when it finally gave way.

It proved to be a *Salem-Gibraltar*. Now a Salem Gibraltar is a big piece of hard sugar candy. It i so hard that, if a sailor starts sucking one when h boat leaves Salem harbor, it will last him until h sights Gibraltar.

Tuck looked critically at the Salem-Gibralta

was half sucked and it had many things sticking it. He took off two fish hooks and a jack knife lade. Then Tuck felt a thrill. On the under side the Salem-Gibraltar he came suddenly face to face ith *the lost key!*

"Eureka!" shouted the cabin boy, as he leapt to s feet, and then he added ruefully, "if I'd only had e heart to go on with that sweetie, I'd a-found it ng ago."

Nip fitted the key into the rusty key hole. With great jangling sound the chains fell from Tom. He stood free at last. Tom threw one arm around uck and one arm around Nip. The three of them anced up and down the beach to the great amuse-ent of the gulls and the merpeople. The ship's ew watched, but they were not amused. They were oroughly alarmed.

CHAPTER VII

CAPTAIN THOMAS FOOLHARDY

WHEN the three friends were out of breath, they sat down to talk matters over.

"The tide will soon be coming back in again and the ship will be afloat," said Tuck. "We must agree upon a course of action."

"What would you suggest?" asked Tom, who was so thankful to be free that he was ready to do whatever they suggested.

"Well," said Tuck, "I should like to see you captain of that ship. I may be able to help you if you'll

promise to give up pirating in the future and take up something quieter."

"You saved my life," cried the young man grasping Tuck by his spoon paw, "and now you'll be the making of me!"

"Come with me," said Tuck.

The morning light was growing brighter. The sea gulls were in action and were flying about the helpless ship screaming in wonder. Nip and Tuck and Tom Foolery walked out across the wide white sands to where the ship lay on her side.

Tuck stepped forward and said in his best chest tones, "I summon the captain of this craft to appear before me!"

Trembling with fright, the captain climbed over the side of the ship. He fell on his knees in the sand before Tuck.

"I'm a hard-working man," he moaned. "I've widows and orphans galore. Have mercy on me, sir!"

"I will have pity," said Tuck. "I will not desert *you* upon a lonely shore." Then he added firmly, "I hereby *demote* you. From now on you will be undercabin boy of this gallant ship."

"Hear, hear!" cried Nip, and he beat upon the hat-tub.

"And you, noble sir," said Tuck, turning to Tom Foolery, "you, I appoint captain of this boat."

"May she sail long and happily!" cried Nip as he beat still louder upon the tub.

Tom Foolery knelt upon the sand. Tuck placed first his spoon paw upon Tom's bended head, and then his fork paw.

"Rise, oh captain," cried Tuck. "No longer shall you be known as *Tom Foolery*. Henceforth and forever you shall be known on all crafts and in all ports, as *Captain Thomas Foolhardy*."

Nip beat so hard upon the tub that Tuck had to warn him not to beat through the bottom of it. The new captain rose and looked about him with a keen and piercing eye.

"My ship, too, shall have a new name," he said. "Henceforth she shall be called the *Salem-Gibraltar*. She shall pirate the seas no more but shall sail about aiding those in need."

"Hear, hear!" cried Nip.

Then Tuck turned to the crew of the ship. They

were watching with all their eyes and listening with all their ears to what was going on.

"Will you promise to obey your captain?" he asked.

"Aye, aye, sir!" answered the crew as one man.

"Then you may come down from your yards and masts and rest awhile," said Tuck. "I promise you safety."

The men dropped to the sands with sighs and groans of relief. They were stiff and sore from hanging on so long. But they had not much time to rest. The tide was coming in.

In, in, in came the tide. Half a mile in and forty feet up it came.

"To your posts," cried Tuck. "The *Salem-Gibraltar* will soon be afloat."

The men clambered to their places. The new captain wrung the paws of his two new friends.

"If ever I can be of service to you, sirs," he began, but his feelings were too intense to let him finish.

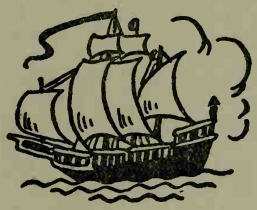
Five hours earlier he had entered that bay, a prisoner in chains, about to be deserted on a desert shore. He was leaving, the captain of his own ship,

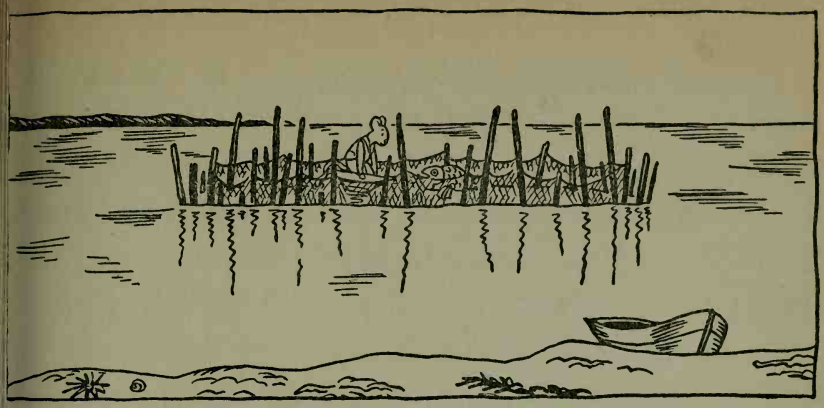
which is what every sailor boy dreams of being. He could not express his thanks.

In, in, in came the tide. The water was all around the ship. Slowly she began to right herself. The sailors were running about her decks making her ready for the trip. The new captain tramped about the deck and shouted,— I started to say that he shouted his orders as the old captain had done. Far from it! Captain Thomas Foolhardy always spoke politely and he always said please.

The rest of the crew soon dropped their rough ways. The ship became one of the pleasantest spots on earth, or rather I should say, on water.

Nip and Tuck walked back to their home. They stood at the door and watched the boat sail far, far away. Then she disappeared from view. Nothing remained to tell the tale save a biscuit cask and a water cask lying upon the sands.





CHAPTER VIII

THE WEIR

AS spring came on, up by the Bay of Fundy, Nip began to grow fat and at the same time he grew even lazier than he had been before. He grumbled and grumbled about how hard it was for him to make a living, when all he had to do in the world was to sit with his tail in the water and catch fish.

"Wish I had a weir!" sighed Nip.

"Now you keep away from other people's weirs," warned Tuck, "if you want to live in peace with the fishermen."

"Don't want to live at peace with anybody," muttered Nip, but Tuck was too busy getting his garden started to stay and listen to his talk.

Tuck did not know that, each day, Nip was going up to a headland from which he could look across Digby Neck and over to Saint Mary's Bay on the other side. It was in Saint Mary's Bay that the fishermen had their weir. Nip took his spy-glass with him. He could watch the activities of the fishermen down in Saint Mary's Bay.

"Wish I had a weir!" Nip would sigh to himself.

For a weir is like a huge trap, and out of it, each day, the fishermen took hundreds and thousands of little shining, flapping fish. To make the weir, the fishermen had driven posts into the soft mud at the bottom of the bay. They put the posts in a circle and they put them so close together that not even a tiny fish could swim between. They left one little door open and it was so arranged that it was very easy for a fish to swim into the weir but very hard for him to find his way out again. So hundreds and hundreds of fish swam into the trap each day and then the fishermen caught them all in their great net. Nip would watch them from his headland.

"Think of having a whole weir full of fish," hought Nip, but he was quite too lazy to build iimself one.

When the fishermen were ready to take the fish rom the weir, they would fasten a great net around he inside of the posts. The net had a strong rope run hrough the bottom of it. When all was ready the ishermen pulled up the rope. The net closed in and he fish were caught in a bag. The fishermen called t "pursing the weir."

From his headland, Nip would watch the process vith longing. As the net closed in, he could see that t was filled with flapping, splashing silver fish which he men ladled into boats and carried off to the can- iery to be made into sardines.

One day Nip could endure the sight no longer.

"Think of it," he said to a sea gull who had perched for a minute on the rocks beside him, "just hink of having a whole weir full of little flapping ish about you, all just ready to jump into your nouth!"

"Hum," said the sea gull, "you don't have to vork very hard for your fish."

"I think I do," replied Nip, "and my tail's tired. want a weir."

At the mention of the weir, the sea gull flew off to Saint Mary's Bay to pick up anything that the fishermen might not want. The other gulls joined him and they darted and screamed about the weir picking up their breakfasts.

It was too much for Nip. He started strolling down to the shore, keeping an eye on Tuck. But Tuck was setting out his tomato plants and his lettuces and he was well occupied. Nip climbed into his hat-tub and began to float about. The tide was going out and it carried Nip along with it. Nip always managed to use the tides as much as possible to save himself work.

When he was well out from shore, Nip paddled a little. He paddled down towards the Petit Passage. Now the Petit Passage leads through to Saint Mary's Bay on the other side of Digby Neck. It was in Saint Mary's Bay that the fishermen had their weir. When Nip reached the Petit Passage he should have turned around and paddled home. He did not. The tide was rushing through the Petit Passage. Nip lay back and let the tide carry him and his tub through with it. Through the Petit Passage the tide swirled him. It was but a short paddle to the weir.

Nip looked about for fishermen but the boats were all gone. The way was clear. He steered his tub into the opening. The weir was so full of sardines that Nip could sit on the edge of his tub and just pick them out of the water. He began to stuff himself.

Suddenly a great big face glared up through the water at him. Nip jumped back in horror and almost went over into the water. Then the face disappeared. Nip crept to the edge of his tub and peeked over. The face came back and Nip found himself peering into the eyes of a great king fish.

"What are you doing in here?" gasped Nip.

"What are you doing yourself?" jeered the king fish.

"I—eh—, well, I was just stopping off for a light lunch," explained Nip.

The king fish was big enough to eat him and his hat-tub, whole, and Nip was feeling very respectful.

"Come, come," said the king fish impatiently, "why not be frank? You were stealing sardines and I'm stealing sardines and we might as well have a jolly time of it together."

Nip felt relieved. The king fish was evidently

friendly. Indeed, as the time went by, Nip found him more than friendly. Tuck would have thought him vulgar but Nip was too stuffed with fish to care about that.

"What happens to you," asked Nip, "when the fishermen purse the weir? Don't you get caught?"

"I'm the terror of the weir," laughed the king fish. "I break right through their nets and I smash down their weir and I get away. Of course I don't always," added the king fish. "There's my brother over on that float. He got caught yesterday. He weighed so much that they had to tow him ashore."

But family feeling is not strong among king fish and this one went right on eating sardines as though there had not been a recent loss in his home circle.

When the tide turned, Nip decided that it was time for him to be leaving. He needed all the help that the tide could give him on his way home. So he bade good night to the king fish and promised to be back the next day.

Down to the Petit Passage went Nip with little work on his part. The tide rushed him through. Then he paddled slowly along the shore till he came to the home beach.

Tuck asked him where he had been. Nip was too leepy to answer much but he said that he had been rowing interested in science lately and that he had een out all day making deep-sea observations.

Tuck became more and more suspicious. He de- ided to watch Nip more carefully.

But the next morning Tuck found that the rab- its had been at his lettuces during the night. Tuck

as much troubled by rabbits. He hastened up to is garden. Nip took the opportunity to roll the hat- ub down to the shore. With a last look to make sure hat Tuck was still busy, Nip paddled down the ore in the direction of the Petit Passage.

When Nip arrived at the weir, the king fish was lready there. They both fell to and they ate as any sardines as they could comfortably hold. Then ey became very silly. They had the hiccoughs from

eating too much. The king fish suggested that they lie on their backs and try to eat one fish more apiece. But just as Nip got the sardine up to his mouth, the king fish gave him a poke in the ribs with his fin, to make him laugh. Nip choked on the sardine and the hat-tub nearly tipped over. That sobered Nip for he could not swim. But the king fish did not care. He enjoyed the water so he only laughed the harder. He was quite a rough king fish.

The king fish had taught Nip a song. Nip lay on his back in the tub and the king fish floated on his back in the water and they sang on two quite different keys. It was to the tune of,

"Can she make a cherry pie,
Billy Boy, Billy Boy,
Can she make a cherry pie,
Charming Billy?"

The king fish's song went,

"Can they can you in a can,
In a can, in a can,
Can they can you in a can,
In Sardinia?"

Nip shouted out the refrain,

"Oh they'll can you if they can
They are canny if they can.
They are canny if they can you,
In Sardinia."

Now while the two of them sang with no thought ut of their silly selves, the fishermen on the shore ere becoming suspicious. They saw strange black bjects bobbing about in their weir. The fishermen elt that all was not as it should be.

Quickly and quietly they got out their boats. hey wanted to catch the thieves, not frighten them way. Out to the weir they rowed, making as little oise as possible.

Nip and the king fish were far too silly and too usy to notice anything amiss. Once or twice the sea ulls screamed a warning but they took no notice.

On and on came the men. They could see clearly iat there were thieves in the weir stealing their fish. hey swung their boat into the weir and blocked the pening, that the robbers might not escape. It was ot until that very moment that Nip and the king sh realized what had happened.

The king fish gave a whoop and dove into the water. It was easy for him. He could swim. Nip gave a frantic look about for help. There was none in sight. Then holding his nose tightly with one paw, he scrambled over the edge of the tub. Boo—how he hated cold water! He could not swim so he had to hold on to the edge of the tub to keep from drowning.

The fishermen pulled their boat into the weir. They were surprised to find a hat-tub floating about.

"How do you suppose this ever got in here?" asked one of the men. "Give me a hand there and I'll throw it out."

Nip had to let go of the tub and quickly catch at the end of the boat. The men pulled the tub from the water. They lifted it up in the air and sent it flying over the weir. Splash, it landed in the open sea.

"Oh my tub, my precious tub!" wailed Nip.

"What was that sound?" asked one of the fishermen.

"Nothing but a sea gull," the others assured him.

But after that Nip remembered to keep still. He was hiding under the edge of the boat. He kept only

he very tip end of his nose above water. He was in sorry plight. Indeed he was in such a sorry plight hat his only hope lay in the fishermen. Perhaps they vould not stop to purse the weirs! Perhaps they vould row back to land! He could hang on to the oat and be towed in!

His hope was not to come true.

"Now we're out here," said one of the fishermen, 'we might as well take in what fish there are. We aught a tub in the weir and we might as well see vhat else we've caught."

With that the men began to put out the net. Nip's heart descended to the end of his water-soaked ail. If it had not been for the fish hook at the end f the tail, he would have lost it altogether. If the ishermen pursed the weir, they would purse him ight along with the sardines. There seemed no onger any hope for Nip.

The men pulled the boat around the weir, fastening the net as they went. Nip ducked about behind he boat and no one chanced to notice him.

The king fish swam up from below.

"They may overlook you now, my boy," he eered, "but they'll find you in the net."

Nip began to understand why Tuck considered king fish vulgar.

"I wonder what kind of a can they'll put you in?" teased the king fish. "They put me up marked *'Tuna,'* I suppose they'll label you, *'Nip and Tuck.'* "

Nip saw nothing funny about the king fish's jokes. So the king fish swam off, humming,

"Oh they'll can you if they can,
If they can, if they can.
Oh they'll can you in a can,
In Sardinia."

But now the fishermen were ready to pull up the net. They shouted to each other and pulled on the rope. Slowly in closed the great net. There were hundreds and thousands of little fish inside of it. There was also Nip and the king fish, but the fishermen did not know that as yet.

As the net pulled closer, the fish leapt from the water and sparkled like a fountain of silver in the sunlight. It was far from beautiful to Nip. He had lost hold of the boat and he ducked and paddled about, almost drowned in fish. He was in a bath of

live, flapping sardines. He never wanted to see, hear, or taste a sardine again in all his life! What was he to do?

Now, all the time, the sea gulls were swooping above the weir, catching what fish they could. They screamed to Nip, but they could do nothing to help him, for the fishermen drove them off from the weir. At last one gull flew back across Digby Neck to where Tuck was working in his garden.

"Nip's been caught in the weir," cried the sea gull. "The men are pursing the net. They'll get him. They'll get him!"

With a long scream of woe, the sea gull flew off over the blue waters of the Bay of Fundy.

Tuck dropped his work. He was so weak with worry that he could scarcely climb to the headland. But climb he did, and with his trembling paw he fitted the spy-glass to his eye. There he saw the fishermen pursing the weir. There he saw the hat-tub floating empty out on Saint Mary's Bay. Nip was not to be seen. Tuck feared the worst. He sat down in misery upon a rock to watch. The gulls flocked about him in sympathy and flew down to the weir for the latest news. They were fond of Tuck and it made their hearts ache that Nip should cause him so much pain.

Then came shouts from the weir. The fishermen had just seen the king fish.

"There's a king fish in the weir!" they cried. "Get him! Get him!"

They leaned over the edge of the boat with an axe and a saw.

Now the king fish had darted up from the bottom of the weir because the net was getting too close for him. He was planning to make his dash for liberty. He was going to break through the net, and break through the weir, and swim away to the distant depths of the ocean. And, as you will see, he was not such a bad king fish, at heart, after all. He

planned to rescue Nip and to help him out of the weir.

"Quick there, catch hold of my tail," whispered the king fish and he swam close to Nip. "I'll get you out of this mess if you hang on tight."

"I can't go under the water," wailed Nip. "I'll drown!"

"You can hold your breath for a minute or two, and it won't be long," replied the king fish. "If you don't hurry up you'll be canned," he added for cold comfort.

The fishermen had glimpsed the king fish. They started shouting again and rushed to that side of the boat. They leaned so far over the edge that they nearly tipped the boat over.

"Get him! Get him!" shouted the fishermen as they waved the axe and the saw.

"Quick now!" muttered the king fish.

Nip gripped the king fish's tail with both his paws. He shut his eyes tight and he held a back paw over his nose. Down, down, down they went. There was great confusion amongst the little fishes in the net. The water seemed to boil with them. There came a ripping sound. The king fish had torn open the net.

He slid through the hole with Nip trailing behind. But the weir itself was still ahead.

Nip clung to the fish's tail. His very life hung on that tail! He was nearly bursting, from holding his breath, but hold it he must. The king fish began to lunge against the posts of the weir. He was looking for a weak spot. Nip felt one post give; then another went; and another. But time was pressing. Nip felt that he could not hold his breath for a second longer; no, not for even a half second. Then the king fish slid through the hole, and Nip went after him, gripping his tail.

At last Nip felt himself go up, up, up through the water. Then his nose came above the surface. He gasped for breath and opened his eyes. Never had the light of day seemed so beautiful to Nip. Then he went back under the water again and came up choking and sputtering.

The sea gulls saw him and hastened to his side. They floated beside him and held him up while he rested. Then they helped him over to his hat-tub which was rocking gently on the waves near at hand. How good it seemed to Nip to climb into the old, familiar tub again!

The king fish swam up to see if everything was

ıll right. He hummed a new verse to his favorite tune.

"Were we weary in that weir,
In that weir, in that weir?
Were we weary in that weir?
WE WERE WEARY!"

Nip smiled a tired good-by as the king fish swam away. He was not such a bad king fish after all.

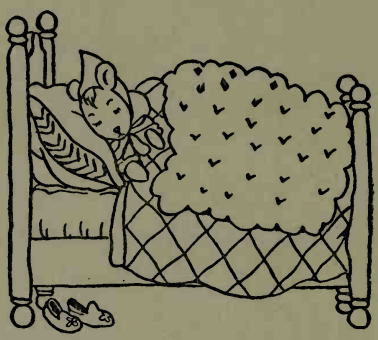
But it was not safe to linger so near to the fishermen. The gulls urged Nip to start for home. Tuck, who had been watching from the headland, was waving frantically for him to come. So as soon as Nip had his breath, he started paddling down towards the Petit Passage. The tide had changed and for once it was against Nip. For once he had to paddle till his fat sides ached. There was no help for it.

When Tuck saw that Nip had started for home, he put away his spy-glass and trotted back to the house to have things ready. He felt very tired, himself, and he did hope that Nip had learned a lesson.

It was a long, weary paddle for Nip. Several pounds of fat dropped from his fat sides. But finally he made his way through the Petit Passage, the tide against him all the way. Then he paddled down the

shore to the home beach. He left the hat-tub dow on the shore and Tuck had to run out to save i from being carried off by the next tide. Nip was to tired to care.

Tuck had his bed ready for him. Nip droppe upon it and was soon fast asleep. But he was rest less. He had troublesome dreams. Tuck heard hin



murmuring to himself in his sleep. Tuck leaned ove Nip's bed to listen. Nip was singing to himself,

"Were we weary in that weir,
In that weir, in that weir?
Were we weary in that weir?
WE WERE WEARY!"

Nip gave a great sneeze and turned over. Tuck ran to fill the hot water bottle to put at his feet.

CHAPTER IX

NIP'S NEW HAT

THE weather grew warmer and the sun was high over the Bay of Fundy. All day long Nip sat on his rock. He was doing his own work these days, and keeping away from the weir. He had had an experience which made it seem the wisest course.

The sun grew very hot on the back of his neck. Nip came up to the house with a bad sunburn and a headache. Tuck filled the hot water bag with cold water and put it on Nip's brow. That made matters better. But Tuck was worried.

"He'll be having a sunstroke next thing I know," said Tuck. "He ought to have a good, big shade hat."

Nip's birthday was coming soon. Tuck decided to buy him a new hat for a present.

Now every day there is a bus which runs down Digby Neck. The man who runs it is very kind. Any errands that you wish done, he will do for you. You leave a note for him in one of the letter boxes which stand on posts by the side of the road. The driver, whose name is Joe, stops at each letter box. He leaves letters and papers, but he takes out any note addressed to him. Sometimes a note says:

Dear Joe.—Please buy shoes for John.

Or, again, it might say:

Dear Joe.—What shall we have for Sunday dinner? Please pick out what looks best. Many thanks.

Susan.

It made no difference what the note said, Joe always did the errands when he got to town and he always left the package on his next trip out. He always bought exactly what was wanted, at least he

always had done so up to the time of which I am telling, and he always has since. But this once he made a mistake.

That night Tuck wrote a note. It was hard to write with a spoon paw and a fork paw. Tuck ended by holding his pen in his teeth. He wrote with great care.

DEAR JOE.—PLEASE BUY ME A HAT.
TUCK.

Tuck folded the letter carefully and hid it in his pouch. Later in the evening he ran out to the road to put his letter in a post box. But here a question arose. Whose letter box should he use?

Tuck and Nip did not receive much mail and they had never arranged for a box of their own. Nip had his papers on hand for the next twenty years. Tuck had no relations in all the world, and there is no Rural Mail Service in Siam so Nip never heard from his. Tuck decided that he would have to borrow a letter box in order to get his note to Joe.

He walked along the moonlit road, considering. At last he came to the Widow Jones' house on the edge of the town.

"The widow has a kind heart," thought Tuck. "She won't mind if I use her box."

So Tuck reached up on tip-toe and slipped his letter into the Widow's box. Then he trotted happily home to bed.

As he came into the house Nip woke up. Tuck soon put him to sleep by singing to him. He had learned the tune that the king fish sang, but he had made up new words to it.

"Are we very fond of fish,
Fond of fish, fond of fish?
Are we very fond of fish,
Up in Fundy?
We are very fond of fish,
Oyster stew or any dish,
Or a lobster if you wish,
On far off Fundy."

The next morning when Joe read his note, he was very much pleased.

"PLEASE BUY ME A HAT," read Joe. "Well I never, the widow wants me to buy her a hat," he exclaimed.

As he drove to town, he thought the matter over

"The widow's been wearing black long enough," he decided. "I'm going to pick her out something cheering for a change."

When he reached the town of Digby he drove straight to the best millinery shop. He looked over the stock and then he chose a beautiful big leghorn hat with red roses all round the crown. They packed it in a large box marked "Ladies' French Millinery."

"It's just the very thing for her," said Joe as he went back to his bus.

Then he drove on down to the station to meet the Blue Nose Express which is the best train that comes in each day from Yarmouth.

That evening when Joe passed the Widow Jones' house, Tuck was hidden in the bushes. He watched eagerly. He saw the bus stop. Then Joe leaned way over and put a large box on top of the post, balancing it with care. The bus went on. Tuck scuttled out from behind his bush. He picked up the box and hurried home as he did not wish to meet anyone. He hid the box under his bed.

At breakfast the next morning the box was standing beside Nip's place. There was a card with *Happy Birthday* written upon it. Nip eyed the box with sus-

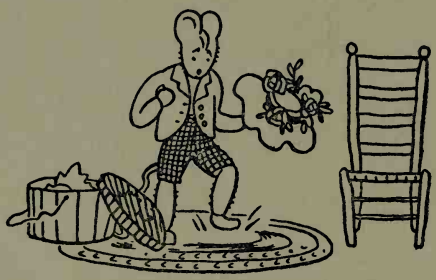
picion. He read the sign on top about the ladie French millinery. Then he opened it and pulle aside the tissue paper. He looked down upon th wreath of red roses.

"Is it a birthday cake?" he asked nervously.

"Take it out and see," urged Tuck.

But a sudden fear gripped Tuck's heart. Ni was fussy about what he wore. Perhaps he wouldn like his new hat!

Out of the box and the tissue paper came the ha



It was large and white and the brim was flappy. Th roses were the reddest of blooms.

"It's just lovely," sighed Tuck.

The roses reminded him of tomatoes, and tomat salad was one of his favorite dishes.

But Nip did not look pleased.

"It's a lady's hat," he said as he spun it aroun

on his paw. Then he added with much firmness, "I'm not a-going to wear it!"

"Nonsense," said Tuck. "It's a beautiful hat for either a lady or a gentleman. There aren't any ladies around here anyway! The sun's hotter than ever. Put that hat on your head and go down and fish for your breakfast."

Now of course they were both in the wrong. Tuck was really very sorry that he had gotten the wrong kind of hat. But he did not say so. Nip should have thanked Tuck for his kind thought. But Nip did not. Instead, he put the hat on his head and went down to the beach, grumbling. Tuck stayed up in the house and did the housework and felt cross. When matters are in that state, there is sure to be trouble. There was.

Down on the shore sat Nip with the new hat on his head. He felt most uncomfortable.

"What'll the fishes and the sea gulls say when they see me in this rig?" he muttered.

He took out his paper and he tried to forget about the hat. But just then the sea gulls saw him.

"My goodness!" they screamed. "What's happened to Nip?"

"Leave me alone!" snapped Nip.

The sea gulls only flew about and cheered.

"Can't you fellows stop it!" grumbled Nip. "You're scaring all the fish away. I haven't had a bite yet."

It was not the gulls, however, that were frightening the fish. It was the reflection of the red roses in the water. Nip kept looking at his tail to be sure that the fish hook had not come out. All was in good order but not a fish did he catch.

It was Evangeline who finally told him what the trouble was.

"The fishes are all leaving," she called out to him. "They say there's a strange red glow in the water that they don't like."

Then she caught sight of the hat. She ducked quickly under the water but little bubbles kept rising. She was giggling. It was too much. Nip hurled the hat from his head.

"I won't wear it!" he screamed. "Not for any-old-thing or any-old-body! It's my birthday and I'm having a horrid time. I've not had a bite to eat and I'm tired of this!"

He started to jump on the hat but Tuck had

heard him from the house. Tuck ran down and saved the hat.

"Now don't be silly," said Tuck. "I'm sorry that you don't like your new hat but it won't hurt you to wear it just today. I'll order another tomorrow."

"Yes, it will hurt me," cried Nip. "I guess you'll be sorry when I die of starvation. It scares off all the fishes."

"Go out in your hat-tub," said Tuck. "The deep sea fishes won't be such scare-cats."

Tuck brushed off the sand from the hat. He gave a deep sigh. It was such a lovely hat. Why couldn't Nip appreciate it! He handed it to Nip who sulkily put it back on his head. Then Tuck went back to his housework and Nip rolled out his tub.

It was just as Tuck had said. The deep sea fishes were not afraid of the red. Instead they were attracted by it. Nip soon caught a good breakfast. But he was still cross. He decided to give Tuck a scare. So he curled up in his tub, put the hat over him for shade, and went to sleep.

Hour after hour passed by. Nip was an excellent sleeper. Indeed, usually, nothing but hunger woke him up. But this time something else did.

Tap, tap, tap came on the bottom of the hat tub. Nip woke up. Tap, tap, tap, came the sound. Nip peeked over the edge of the tub. He looked straight into the open mouth of a large shark. Nip fell back into the tub, shivering with fear.

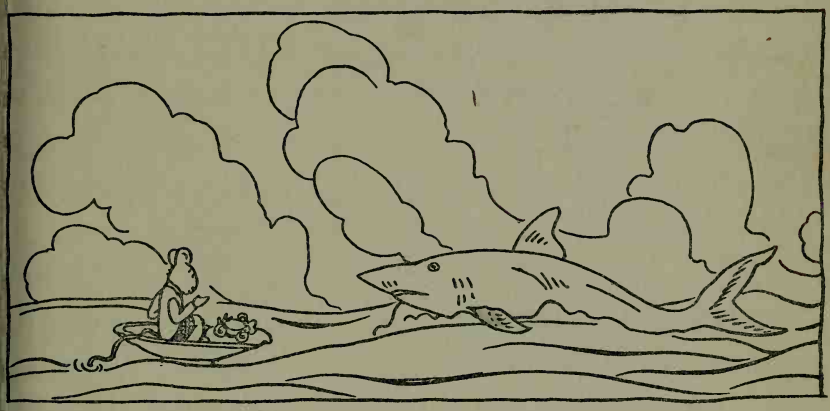
He had not seen a shark since he had left Siam, but he remembered what they were. Sharks do not usually come as far north as the Bay of Fundy, but this one had been suffering from a high fever. He had sought cooler waters to reduce it. His temperature had just dropped to normal and he was starving hungry. He was looking for a lunch.

Nip sat hunched up in the very middle of his tub. He looked about him for help, but, during the hours that he had slept, he had floated far from home. He could not see a friendly sight. Tap, tap, tap went the shark, nosing about the tub. Then the shark tried to tip the tub over. Nip sat very still and very small.

In the far distance he could make out land. He did not know what land it was, but any land was better than this. If he only dared put out a paw to paddle! He wondered if he could persuade the shark to go away for a few minutes. He looked about

him. There lay the hat that had caused all the trouble!

Nip reached for it and pulled off a great red rose. Then he leaned over the edge of the tub and offered it to the shark. The shark liked its looks and began to turn over on his back to open his mouth. Sharks



keep their mouths on their under sides in a most inconvenient place.

Nip hurled the rose as far across the water as he could throw it. The shark dove after it. Nip put two paws into the water and paddled for land as hard as he could.

He had gone quite a little way before the shark caught up with him again. Nip hurriedly drew in

his paws to a place of safety. The shark had enjoyed the rose and wanted another. He liked the taste of the red, and the plush tickled his throat as it went down.

Nip picked another rose from the hat. He flung it as far as he could. Again the shark swam after it, and, during his absence, Nip made a dash for the shore. It was nearer now. He could see the trees and rocks. But would the roses hold out until he reached it?

Nip rested a minute, and then picked a third rose for the shark. As the shark turned to swim after it, Nip paddled in great lunges. It looked as though his hat-tub was a water animal with two shore legs. It splashed along through the water at quite surprising speed. Nip was working harder than he had ever worked before in all his lazy life.

A fourth rose gone to the shark! The hat-tub scuttled through the water like mad. There were only two roses left. It seemed to Nip that he could paddle no more. He lay in the hat-tub, panting for breath. Then came the tap, tap, tap on the bottom of the tub. Nip threw the next to the last rose, and paddled as he never supposed he could paddle.

He was quite near to the shore by now. The last ose went to the shark. Nip made a last spurt. His ub scraped against a rock. Gripping his hat, or all hat was left of his hat, Nip jumped for the shore.

He was just in time. There came a crunching ound. The shark had taken a bite out of the hat-ub! But he found it hard to chew so he gave up nd swam off. The hat-tub floated out to sea. Nip lay n the beach, too tired even to save it.

There on the sands lay Nip, fanning himself vith his hat. He did not know where he was. He did ot know whether he would ever see his home again. But for the moment he did not care. He was happy ust to be on shore. It was enough!

After an hour he sat up, feeling better. He found hat he was very hungry and that the sun was set-ing. If he wanted fish he must go down for it now. But down by the water he was dreadfully nervous. He kept putting his tail into the water and then umping quickly around to be sure that a shark was ot biting it. After some time, he caught enough fish or his supper. When he had eaten, he felt much etter.

Night came on and the moon rose. Nip made him-

self a tent out of the leghorn hat. He curled up under it, and, finally, he fell asleep.

Morning came, but no pleasure with it. It was a wet, dreary day. Nip could not think where he was. He felt stiff and cold. He started to scold Tuck for not putting enough covers on his bed. Then he remembered where he was. There was no Tuck to scold and no one to blame but himself!

Nip got up and stretched. He had no idea what to do. His tub was gone. He would probably be left upon this wet, cold shore to die.

"I always have bad luck," sighed Nip.

Then he decided that, in case a search party came out to look for him, he should put up a signal. What should he use? There lay the hat. He climbed to the top of the highest tree that he could find. Luckily the hat had an elastic on it. He twisted it about the top-most branch of the tree. The hat was wet but it flapped bravely in the breeze. Nip climbed down again. He sat at the foot of the tree, waiting to be rescued.

Back at home Tuck was sick with worry. He called all his friends about him, the merpeople and the sea gulls. They all came and they sat about him,

n the rocks and the sand. Tuck told them how he ad made Nip wear a hat that he didn't like and ow he had gone off in his tub and had not come ack. Tuck begged them to help him search for Nip.

Henry, the merman, liked to plan things. He or-anized the hunt. He divided the gulls into four arties. One party was to fly east, one west, one orth, and one south. They were to keep their eyes pen for any sign of the lost one. Meanwhile the nerpeople were to search the ocean. Off went the arties. Tuck went back to his cottage to wait. He uilt up the fire and kept a pot of coffee hot. The ain beat down on the lonely little house.

At noon the merpeople returned. Evangeline alled Tuck to come down to the beach. They had ound the hat-tub! There was one great bite gone rom the side. What did it mean?

Tuck rolled the tub up to the house. He decided o plant it full of roses in memory of Nip. But the ears ran down his face so fast that the hat-tub was oon half full of water. Tuck decided that, instead f planting roses in the tub, he would keep gold fish n it. They were better suited to the memory of Nip.

By night they had nearly given up hope of ever

finding Nip. One party after another of gulls cam back. They brought no word of the lost one. The told their sad news to Henry and then went sadl off to their cliffs for the night. There was no flappin of wings nor screaming. All were quiet and heavy hearted.

But after all the other gulls were back, on young gull flew in alone. He was so tired he coul scarcely speak, but Tuck poured black coffee dow his throat to give him strength. When he had reste a minute, he began to talk.

"Far, far to the south, I saw a tall tree wit something waving from it," cried the young gull. " could not make out exactly what it was, but it looke almost like a hat, a white leghorn hat."

"A hat!" exclaimed Tuck with joy, "who but Ni would be signalling with a hat! Why didn't you g on?"

"I was too wet and tired," said the young gul "and it was growing dark. But I noted the countr about. I can lead a party there in the morning."

Tuck thanked the young gull with all his hear He sent him off to bed, so that the young gull migh have as long a night's rest as possible. But Tuc

ould not sleep. He was up betimes, cooking a hot reakfast for the search party which was to start at unrise.

Away flew the gulls with the young gull at their ead. Straight to the south they flew. The morning ours went by. The gulls grew very tired. They ested on the rocking waves, but the young gull rged them on. By noon the old gulls said that the oung gull must have made a mistake. The young ull begged them to still have patience.

At two in the afternoon the young gull gave a y of triumph. There ahead was a dark strip of land. rom the highest point on the shore, and from the ighest tree on the highest point, there fluttered omething white. The gulls screamed with pleasure nd they all flew to the land. They swarmed about ne tree and they found Nip asleep under it.

When he heard their cries, Nip opened his eyes. ulls? He was glad to see any one in this cold, wet nd. Suddenly he realized that they were gulls from ne home rocks! He jumped up. The gulls cried and hattered about him. They told him all the news and ow everybody had been hunting for him.

Nip was glad to hear that they had missed him!

Then the gulls picked him up and started t swoop away with him.

"The hat, the hat, save the hat!" cried Nip.

The young gull flew back and pulled it off th branch. All the way home he carried it in his bill.

Tuck was waiting upon the shore to receive them He said over and over again, as he waited, that h would never again be cross with Nip.

That night by the driftwood fire, Nip told hov the hat had saved him. Tuck put all that was lef of the hat into a glass case. To this day he will tell to anyone who will listen, the story of how it save the life of Nip.

The next night, Tuck wrote another letter to Joe He took it out and put it in the Widow Jones' lette box. This time it ran,

THANKS FOR THE LAST HAT BUT IT WAS LADY'S MILLINERY. PLEASE BUY ANOTHER FOR A GENTLEMAN.

When Joe read it, he was much surprised.

"Who'd have thought it of the widow!" he ex claimed.

He bought the hat and, the next day, if you ha

trolled along the shores of the Bay of Fundy, you
vould have seen Nip down on the rocks fishing,
vith a brand new hat from Brooks Brothers on his
ead.

CHAPTER X

THE MOOSE HUNT

NIP was so upset by his experience with the shark that Tuck decided he needed a change of scene. They had heard tell of the beauties of the interior of Nova Scotia, but neither of the two had ever been away from the coast. They decided to take a trip.

One fine day Tuck put the house in order. He packed the things which they needed to take with them, in a foot-tub. The hat-tub was too large to take but they could comfortably swing the foot-tub between them. They put their tooth brushes and their

pajamas into it and off they started. Down the roa they went, towards the unmapped interior of Nov Scotia.

"There are no maps to show us where we ough to go, which is a good thing, because then we can lose our way," said Tuck. "If you haven't any wa you can't lose it, can you?"

"I shouldn't think so," replied Nip.

He was deep in thought, wondering whether h was going to like fresh water fish, and whether h had a supply of the right bait. He followed wher Tuck led, without paying much attention to wher they did go.

The first day's travelling was along pleasan country roads with hedges of wild rose and golden rod on either side. A few roses still bloomed althoug it was nearing fall and the golden-rod was a mass o glory. They passed ox carts going slowly down th road, two great beasts with wide spreading horn pulling blue carts filled with hay. They passe through villages and towns. They went through th towns by night because they did not wish to attrac attention. At last they came to the woods and th lakes of the unmapped interior.

It was beautiful country, but it was very hard o travel through the woods. Nip puffed and panted long back of Tuck as they pushed through the nderbrush. They might have given up and gone ome if they had not chanced upon the Grand High- vay.

Now I have never seen it myself but this is what hey say. There runs through the center of Nova cotia a strange pathway. The Indians knew of it nd used it and hunters have sometimes found it. They call it the Grand Highway. Right through the voods it runs, a low ridge of gravel and stones vhere no trees grow. It is as though a glacier of old ad laid out a road through the tangle.

It was good luck that Tuck and Nip came out ipon the Grand Highway. They had struggled hrough the woods long enough, and *too* long for Nip! But with the Grand Highway to walk upon, t was quite a different matter! They trotted along, winging the foot-tub between them. And so on they vent, until the end of the day found them by the ide of a beautiful lake. They decided to make camp nd to stay for some time in this lovely spot.

While Tuck was putting up the tent and gather-

ing firewood, Nip went down to the shore of the lake to see what the chances were for good fishing. It was a clear, calm evening. The water of the lake was so still that Nip could see fishes darting about amid the reflections of the monster hemlock trees that edged the shore. There were a few wooded islands out in the calm of the lake. For a minute Nip forgot fish while he watched a deer step out from the thicket and swim across the lake. Then a loon gave a strange harsh laugh which brought Nip back to the subject of supper.

He ran along the shore looking for the right spot where he could sit with his tail in the water. A little way out from the land, he saw a pile of sticks and small logs which looked like a little haystack in the water. It seemed firm. Nip decided that it was an excellent place from which to fish. He gave a run and jumped out onto it.

But much to his dismay, instead of staying on top, Nip went crashing through the pile. He caught a log with his fish hook tail. There he hung, head down, in the darkness, with his nose but a few inches from the water.

There came a snarling of animals about him. Then, as his eyes grew used to the dimness, he made out a fat animal who was beating angrily on a mud shelf with his flat tail. The animal was scolding him and fussing at him. Nip had fallen, quite by mistake, into a beaver's lodge.

Nip was most uncomfortable. He was afraid that the beaver would begin to nibble his ears and he was sure that he was straining the fish hook in the end of his tail.

"I'm dreadfully sorry about this," said Nip to the beaver. "I never intended to drop in on you this way. I'm not from this part of the country and we don't have beavers on Digby Neck."

For answer the beaver gave a great sigh that ruffled the hair all up and down Nip's back.

"I thought you were a trapper!" said the beaver. "You have no idea how we're troubled by trappers! They come in through the tops of our houses and put traps about while we're away. Then, when we come back, we swim right into the traps without warning. It's too dreadful."

"It must be," agreed Nip as he let himself down

onto the shelf beside the beaver. "It sounds to me like an outrage. But you should not wear such valuable coats."

"You've no idea how much we're worth!" said the beaver with pride.

He started to repair the damage that Nip had caused to the roof. Nip turned to and helped. He enjoyed seeing the beaver pat down the mud with his tail. He showed off the fish hook in the end of his

own tail. The beaver admired it and the two got on famously. When the work was finished and the house as good as new, the two sat and chatted. The beaver told Nip many useful things about fishing in these parts. The two parted the best of friends.

When Nip went back to camp, he told Tuck his adventure. Tuck was glad that Nip had been so polite and helpful. He felt sure that the beaver would be a good, safe friend for Nip.

But Tuck was worried by what the beaver had aid about hunters and trappers in these woods. He urged Nip to find out all he could from the eavers.

The next day Nip went down to chat with the eaver. He picked up what bits of local gossip he ould and he asked about the hunters and trappers.

"They're always after us with traps," said the eaver sadly. "They got my brother James, and my Jncle Albert, and Great Aunt Joan, and my little ousin Val. Oh, I couldn't tell you all," sighed the eaver.

"And the hunters?" asked Nip.

"They come up from the city and each one wants o kill his moose," answered the beaver. "This is reat moose country, you know. You watch and ou'll see the great fellows with trees of horns rowing out of their heads. They'd be mighty in- onvenient, I'd say, but the moose seem proud of hem. And it's the horns the men are after, just as t's our furs they want. They kill a great animal like hat just for his horns!"

"How do the men get them if they're so big and trong?" asked Nip.

"It's queer about it," said the beaver. "The hunters blow on a horn thing. They say they 'call the moose.' When the moose hears it, he gets excited and angry. He dashes right towards the sound. Then the men hide and shoot him."

"Why do the men hide?" inquired Nip.

"Cowards," said the beaver shaking his head; "all men are! They sit at home and think of ways of catching other people without running any risk themselves. They're clever, I'll grant, but cowards every one of them."

When Nip went home, he told Tuck what the beaver had told him and how men call the moose.

"They blow a horn and when the moose hears it, he runs for it," explained Nip.

That evening as they sat by the camp fire, Nip tried an experiment. He took his foot-tub and started blowing along the edge. He wondered if he could make a sound like the one men made by blowing on a horn. At first nothing came but a faint whistle. Then he found a bent place on the tub where he could make a strange, screaming, groaning sound.

"Keep that still," begged Tuck, who wanted to enjoy the calm loveliness of the scene. "You'll be

alling all the screech owls and jackals to life if you ake a noise like that."

But Nip liked his noise. He tried it again and gain. He could make it quite well by now, and its cream rang out through the quiet of the woods. Harder and harder he blew. Louder and louder came he queer, weird cry.

Suddenly from the depths of the forest, there ame an answer. 'Way, 'way off in the woods came a all. Nip blew all the harder.

"WOOOO-OOO-ooo-o," blew Nip.

"Wow, wow!" came the answer.

Back and forth went the echoes. The woods rang.

"You'd better look out!" warned Tuck.

He was anxious. It was time to be.

There came a crashing noise in the woods. It ounded like a storm. Although the sky was clear and he stars bright, the hurricane continued. *Nip had alled a bull moose*. He was coming straight towards hem.

"Run for your life!" shouted Tuck.

He dashed for a tall hemlock and scrambled up . He was not a second too soon. The moose was pon them. Nip gave a quick jump. He tumbled

into the foot-tub and lay on his back, unable to move.

Then a great dark form hovered above him. Nip found his legs as if by magic and scuttled for a tree. The great moose landed with both feet upon the tub. It collapsed with a crash and the moose gave an angry snort of amazement. Down went the great head with the tree of horns upon it. It tossed the remains of the foot-tub into a distant tree.

Back and forth across the camp charged the bull moose, looking for things to break up. Down went the tent. The moose trampled it under foot. Then he dashed at the woodpile which Tuck had so carefully collected, and tossed that about. From their trees, Nip and Tuck watched with horror. Next the moose attacked the supply tent. You could hear the cans of condensed milk popping as he stamped on them. Everything that could go, went!

When he could find no more, the moose gave a final bellow and dashed off into the woods. Quiet and peace rested over the ruined camp. Nip and Tuck climbed down from their trees.

"If you ever call another bull moose—" muttered Tuck.

Nip said nothing. He could think of nothing to ay!

Tuck and Nip spent the night in a hollow tree. The next morning they wandered through the woods, icking up such things as they could find. It was a oth brush here, and a pajama top there, and a ettle tossed up to the top of a tree. Nip did not ay much, but for once he worked as hard as he could.

They patched up the tent and moved it to quite distant spot, in case the moose came back that ight. Then, as the day ended, they sat by their fire esting. They were weary after an uncomfortable ight and a day of work.

Suddenly a huge head appeared above them. Tuck fell over backwards and Nip leapt into the air. Then they both dashed for trees.

But a hoarse, kindly voice said, "Don't be afraid.

Please stay where you are. I won't hurt you to night."

It was the bull moose. Nip and Tuck pulle themselves back onto their log, but they could nc shut their mouths for surprise. The bull moose wen on talking.

"The beaver's been telling me about all th trouble I made you," he said. "I'm sorry I broke u

all your things. You see I get so excited that I fo get what I'm doing. Will you please excuse me?"

"Oh, yes, eh—certainly—" stammered Tuck, to confused to talk clearly. "Don't mention it."

The moose trotted off into the night.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Nip.

"It's a shame to take advantage of a great, sof hearted fellow like that," said Tuck. "Think o shooting him and stealing those great horns of his!

"Perhaps," suggested Nip, "we could help him, the hunters come while we're here."

And the hunters did come. It was just the season)r them and they came within a few days. The foxes ought the word and the danger signal was sounded rough all the forest.

"Beware of the hunters!"

That night Tuck and Nip heard the hunters try- g to call a moose. Tuck and Nip shook their heads er it. Then they began to think.

"Wish we could save him!" said Tuck.

Nip jumped to his feet.

"I'm going to try calling him," he cried. "Perhaps will answer me instead of the hunters."

"Get well off from camp, this time!" warned uck.

Nip took the battered remains of his foot-tub. e ran a little distance into the woods and then imbed a tall hemlock. He blew on his tub with all s might. The moose answered him. Then came the ll of the hunters from over the other side of the ke. Nip blew his call. Around went the three calls, swering each other. First came the hunters', then ip's, while the moose ran about in confusion. It was

quite like having the front door bell and the tele phone ring at the same moment!

An hour passed. The hunters were tired out. Nip was so hoarse that he could scarcely blow. The moose was a wreck! They all decided at once to give up and go home. The moose was saved. Nip climbed down from his tree, exhausted but happy.

As the season went on, Tuck and Nip got things so well planned that the hunters did not shoot a single moose. They even gave up coming to those woods to try to shoot. The moose were so grateful to Nip that they followed him around.

Tuck helped the other animals keep out of the traps. He watched over the foxes and the otters and the beavers and the bears. Not one was caught during the whole season.

But winter was coming on, and Tuck and Nip began to long for the Bay of Fundy and the smell of salt air again. Tuck was eager to get back to his little house and Nip had grown tired of fresh water fish. They decided to pack up and start.

The animals were broken-hearted to have them go but they did all they could to help in the packing

uck and Nip promised to come back the next
ar and look out for them all, during the hunting
ason.

When the final day came, it was a great proces-
on that started down the Grand Highway. All the
nimals had come to see Nip and Tuck off for their
stant home. First came the beavers, marching four
breast and beating time with their tails. Then came
ie otters and the muskrats. Back of them marched
ie foxes, and the deer, with their fawns beside them.
he fawns were very large by this time of year and
ard to manage. Then came the line of bull moose.
hey had to march one by one so that their horns
ould not get tangled.

"I'm going to decorate you like Christmas trees,"
id Tuck, and he twined their horns with golden-
od and hung red berries on the tips.

At the very end of the procession came a black
ear. The others were not sure of his good behavior,
ut Nip walked beside him and saw that he did as
nice bear should.

So down the highway marched the animals till
ey came to the end of the woods. Then they bade

their friends goodbye. Nip and Tuck trotted o down the road, turning to wave again and again their dear friends.

So ended their first trip into the unmapped i terior of Nova Scotia. It had been a pleasant or and they hoped to return soon. But it was als pleasant to be getting home again. They travelle for several days along the country road. Then, last came the whiff of salt in the air! They trotte faster.

A screaming in the air and the sea gulls had see them. Down swooped the gulls in welcome, flappin their great white wings. Then they flew away o over the blue waters of the Bay of Fundy to tell a the world that Tuck and Nip were back again.

At last, the two came in sight of the little whi house on the cliff, with its shutters closed, and loo ing very lonely. The weeds in the garden had grow so high that they almost hid the fence, but th dahlias were all in bloom for welcome.

Tuck unlocked the door of the house and thre open the windows to air. There was the hat-tu leaning against the wall waiting for them. It almo seemed as if it smiled.

Down on the beach the merpeople were waiting
o see them. Evangeline waved her hand and the
ierbabies tumbled about and laughed for joy and
vagged their little tails. Even the tide came in
pecially to greet them and it upset the scientists the
vorld over.

So Tuck and Nip settled down happily in their
ittle home. It was good to be back in the little house
n Digby Neck by the shores of the Bay of Fundy.

CHAPTER XI

MISSING THE MOORINGS

IT was late in the autumn when Nip and Tuck reached home. Already there was a cold tingle in the air. The two of them would stay out on the cliff watching the sunsets over the Bay of Fundy. (There is no place in the world that has more lovely sunsets.) Then they would scamper home to toast their toes by the driftwood fire.

One evening they sat out on the cliff. The fishing boats were coming in and unloading at the fish-house on the beach.

"It's cold weather for sailors," remarked Tuck.

"They ought to know enough to stay at home," answered Nip, who did not like to have sympathy wasted on other people.

Tuck signed and turned back to the house. He lighted the fire and made all warm and comfortable, but he kept glancing out of the window that looked upon the sea. The wind was coming up and it whistled about the little house on the cliff.

"I hope all the fishing boats are safe in port," said Tuck.

He opened the window and leaned out, the better to see.

"Shut that window. There's a draught," was all that Nip answered.

But suddenly there came a strange, hissing, zipping noise. Tuck and Nip ran to the door and opened it. It was not yet dark, but the sunset was dimming. All at once it was pierced by a flare of light. The light shot upwards and then burst into a dozen brilliant stars.

"Fireworks!" shouted Nip with delight. "Somebody's sending up fireworks."

Nip clapped his paws, but Tuck was looking serious.

"It's a signal of distress," said Tuck. "I'm afraid that some ship's in trouble."

They stood at the door, wondering what to do. The zipping sound came again. Again came the burst of light and the stars falling from the sky. One by one they fell, fading as they went.

"Wish I knew what to do!" exclaimed Tuck.

A third time came the zipping noise. This time the stars fell all about the little house.

"I'll run down to the fish-house and see if anyone is there," said Tuck.

But all the fishermen had gone home for the night to the village on the other side of Digby Neck. There was no one to call on for help. Tuck ran out on the wharf to try to find out what the trouble was. He could see all too clearly. One of the fishing boats had been belated. Her steersman had become confused in the fading light and had run her on a reef. There she lay at the foot of the cliff, helpless. The tide was high and at that point there was no beach where the sailors could land. The cliff towered straight above the reef.

Tuck ran back to the house to get Nip.

"One of the fishing boats has missed its moorings," he shouted, "and run on the reef. It's over beyond the beach and the tide's high, so the men can't land."

"What do they expect us to do?" asked Nip. "Pull them up the cliff?"

He was grumpy at having to go out in the cold. But he put on his coat and his mittens and followed Tuck. They ran along the cliff until they came to the spot above the reef. Then they lay down on their tummies and wriggled out to the very edge. They looked straight down upon the boat.

The crew saw the two heads peering at them over the cliff. They shouted for joy.

"What do they expect us to do?" repeated Nip. "Can you think of anything?"

But Tuck had no ideas. He felt very helpless.

It was lucky that the sailors did have a plan. They had a light rope which was long enough to reach to the top of the cliff. The light rope was tied to a heavier rope, and that, in turn, to a still stouter rope. The last rope was strong enough to carry a man. There were pulleys and a breeches buoy fastened to

it. A breeches buoy is a canvas bag big enough to hold a man. It is useful in saving people from wrecked ships.

The sailors began to shout and to point. It was hard to hear them but Nip and Tuck gathered that they were to catch the end of the lightest rope. Then they were to pull that up and with it the end of the next heavier rope. After that they were to pull up the third rope and the breeches buoy and fasten it firmly to a rock.

"How do they think they're going to get the first rope up here?" muttered Nip.

The sailors had tied a bit of iron to the end of the lightest rope. One of them, who had been a baseball player, grasped the iron in his right hand. He swung his arm round and round. Then he sent the iron, and the rope with it, spinning up through the air.

Nip and Tuck leaned over as far as they dared to lean. They grabbed for the rope. It did not come far enough. Splash, into the water fell the iron. The waves that broke about the helpless boat seemed to laugh at them.

Again the baseball player steadied himself on the tipping deck and threw with all his might. It was no

good. The rope fell short. A third time, and still the rope splashed in the water. The baseball player sat down and bowed his head in his hands.

Nip was so excited by now that he had forgotten all about himself, which was a good thing. He poked Tuck.

"Would the sea gulls or the merpeople help?" he shouted.

"The merpeople would be dashed to pieces on those rocks and the sea gulls are all asleep," answered Tuck.

"I'll wake up a sea gull," cried Nip.

He wriggled back from the cliff and hurried down to the rocks where the sea gulls slept.

"Come on, now," he called to the first one he met. "Wake right up and come along."

But it is easier to tell a sea gull to wake up than it is to really waken him. Sea gulls are heavy sleepers.

"Um-m," murmured the sea gull and did not move.

Nip pulled his wing. The sea gull opened one eye and then quickly closed it. Nip tweaked his bill. The sea gull opened both eyes and glared angrily at Nip.

"Go away!" said the sea gull.

"We need you badly," begged Nip. "There's a shing boat on the reef. We want you to fly down or the rope."

"Can't they wait till tomorrow?" yawned the ull.

He shut both eyes and hid his head under his ing. Nip took hold of him firmly and shook him. he gull woke up.

"Well?" he asked as though nothing had hap-ened.

Nip repeated his story and, taking the gull by the ing, led him back to the cliff.

Tuck waved for them to hurry. The light was ailing and the fishermen were showing signs of great istress. Nip and the gull joined them and the three f them peeked over the edge of the cliff. Tuck aved to the sailors below and shouted to them to hrow the rope again.

The baseball player had been so battered about n the boat that he had little courage left. But he tood up and threw the iron for a last try. Up, up, ame the iron with the rope behind it. Down, down, larted the gull and snatched it in his bill. In a

second he was back and Tuck and Nip held the rope. Cheers came up from the crew below. The sea gull gave one croak and toppled over, fast asleep.

Tuck and Nip pulled on the rope. Up came the length of light weight rope, with the heavier following. Then up came the second rope with the third fastened to it. Finally they fastened the third rope

to a great boulder. They signalled back that all was ready.

Now down on the boat there was great discussion as to who should go up first in the breeches buoy and try out the rope. One man said that it was the captain's duty to go up first.

"No, no," said the captain firmly. "The captain of the boat is the last man to leave. He must stand by his ship till every soul's ashore."

So there was no help from him. Then the mate ad an idea.

"We'll line up the men by weight," he said. "The ghtest is to go up first and they can get a little eavier each trip."

The captain was the heaviest man on board so e agreed to the idea and that meant that the others ad to. They all looked around to see who was light- st. There was one chore boy on board and every- ne pointed to him.

"I always gets the dirty work," muttered the hore boy, but he saw there was no hope for it, so he limbed into the breeches buoy.

He was so small that he could just peep over the op of the bucket.

"All abo-ard!" shouted the crew and they began o pull on the rope.

At first the thing wouldn't work. Nip and Tuck nspected their end of the rope but could find noth- ng wrong. The fishermen gave another pull. Sud- enly the breeches buoy shot upwards with a great purt. The chore boy let out a howl of dismay. But alf way between the boat and the top of the cliff,

the breeches buoy stuck again. There it hung and nothing could make it move.

The chore boy looked over the edge.

"Le'me up or le'me down!" he shouted, but shouting wouldn't budge the breeches buoy.

The crew pulled and jerked but nothing happened. Then Tuck ran back to the boulder that held the rope. The rope had twisted and was knotted. With a tug he unknotted it. At the same second the

men gave a special pull. Up shot the breeches buoy with such force that the chore boy was shot right out of it and landed sitting on the cliff beside Nip.

Tuck and Nip sent the breeches buoy back down to the boat. The crew was delighted that the rope had held. Each time that they sent a man up it was more of a test than the time before. Heavier and heavier men were sent but all went well.

At last it was the captain's turn. He took a sad farewell of his boat and climbed into the breeches buoy. He weighed three hundred. The sailors tugged for all they were worth. The rope creaked and groaned. Slowly, slowly up came the captain. A sailor shouted that the boulder to which the rope was tied, was tipping. Three men rushed to hold it in place. Up, up came the captain.

Then, just as he reached the top of the cliff, just as he was almost near enough to climb out, the rope stuck. There hung the captain like a May basket on a door knob. He was just out of reach.

"Hi there," cried the captain, "can't you pull me in?"

The crew pulled with a will, but with no other result. The captain was stuck.

"Watch out!" shouted the chore boy. "When she does shoot up, she shoots up sudden."

But the captain did not shoot. He stuck.

"If we could only give that bucket a pull," said the mate. "It's just out of reach!"

"Couldn't you back over and hook it with your tail?" whispered Tuck to Nip.

"No I couldn't," said Nip with decision. "My

tail was not made for that sort of use. It' tender!"

But as time went on and night came down upo them, Nip consented to try. He wriggled out on hi tummy to the very edge of the cliff while Tuck hung on to his front paws. His tail waved about uncer tainly for a moment. Then the fish hook caught i the canvas bag.

"Now," shouted Tuck to the fishermen, "pull!"

The whole crew pulled and Nip jerked the bag It began to move. The men gave a great shout. Th captain held his breath so as to weigh as little a possible. The breeches buoy swung onto the cliff Out jumped the captain. Nip wriggled back to a place of greater safety.

The captain sat down heavily upon the boulde and mopped his brow. Then he turned to the mate

"Is every man ashore?" he asked.

"Aye, aye, sir," said the mate.

"And how are we to thank our gallant friends—" began the captain.

He looked around for Nip and Tuck. They had vanished into the darkness. They were retiring by nature. They were willing to save a life now and

ten, but they were not willing to have a fuss made bout it. As soon as the captain was safe, they had ipped off home.

Back at their house, Nip and Tuck found the fire ill burning.

"I'd like to make those poor souls some hot offee," said Tuck.

"Well, all I ask is that you don't bring them in ere," was Nip's answer as he tumbled into bed.

Tuck built up the fire and soon had a pot of ot coffee steaming on the stove. He took it in both aws and started back to where he had left the sail-rs. He soon found that they were staggering about the dark trying to find the road home. They had o idea just where they had landed or just where to o next.

Tuck set the coffee pot down on the road. The ot, steaming, delicious smell of coffee was carried rough the night.

"Yum-m, yumm," cried the chore boy and the ate and the captain. "What's that we smell?"

They made straight for the coffee for their noses uld smell as well by night as by day. The rest of e crew followed them.

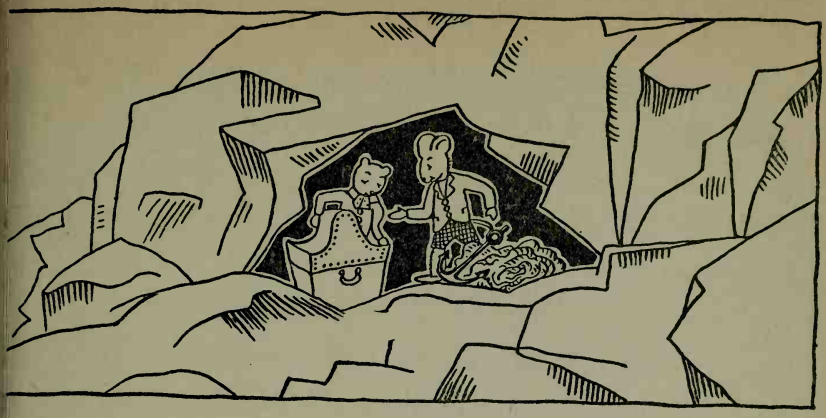
"Where there's coffee, there's hope!" cried th captain.

They gathered around the coffee pot as an around sugar. They drank till every drop wa drained.

"And here's the road," cried the chore boy.

"The village lights are ahead," shouted the mat

Down the road they went. Tuck slipped out fro behind the bushes to rescue his coffee pot.



CHAPTER XII

TREASURE!

NE day Nip was poking along the cliff at some little distance from his home. He was looking for amusement. The tide was high and the fishing would not be good for another hour. He explored the unfamiliar cliffs and he sniffed about in all the cracks and corners. Finally he climbed down to a long rocky point that stretched out into the water.

As the tide went out, he clambered farther and farther out over the rocks. He pulled off limpets and mussels and munched them as he went along. They

were good for tidbits but not filling. Once he bit into a star fish but found it tough. He had tried a jelly-fish before and had his mouth well stung for his trouble. After that he left jellyfish alone. But snails, crawfish, limpets and mussels were plentiful and he poked in among the seaweed to find them.

When he reached the end of the rocky point, Nip sat down to rest. He looked back at the mainland behind him. On one side curved the home bay with the home cliffs rising from the wide sand beach. On the other side of the point there lay a new cove which he had never before examined. Here there was no beach. The rock wall of cliff rose straight from the waves. The surf beat against the base of the cliff. It was a most unfriendly looking cove.

"No place for a boat to land there," thought Nip.

Suddenly he became excited. He ran out onto a rock that gave him a still better view of the bleak, unfriendly cove. He had noticed a great black opening in the cliff just above the reach of the waves. It seemed to be a cave.

"That's a wonderful place for pirates," thought Nip, "if they could ever get to it."

But there seemed to be no way to reach the cave unless one were a human fly and could crawl along the rock wall.

Nip climbed back over the rocks until he was as nearly beneath the mysterious cave as he could get. Then he saw a sight which made him open his eyes even wider than they had been before. Through the growth of barnacles and seaweed that covered the cliff, he could make out steps cut in the rock. The steps led up to the cave. The water covered the lower end of the flight but he felt sure that at low tide he could creep out along a ledge of rock and reach them. Then he saw that there were pieces of iron welded into the rock. The stone was stained with streaks of iron rust.

Nip decided to run home to tell Tuck all about his discovery. Tuck saw him coming and he stopped working in his garden. Tuck felt sure that Nip must be in trouble and he was relieved when he heard the news.

"I've found a cave," panted Nip. "It's way up on the side of the cliff over in the next cove. There are steps leading up to it, only you can't get up now.

I'm going to try it at low tide. Come on! It looks like a pirates' cave. Perhaps we'll find a treasure."

Tuck put down his salad and started along the cliff beside Nip.

"What's your hurry?" asked Tuck as the speed began to tell on him. "It won't be low tide for an hour yet."

"Oh bother the tides!" muttered Nip, who was

so excited that he did not know what he was doing.

Down onto the rocky point they climbed. Nip pointed out his find. Tuck inspected it carefully. A few more steps in the rock had been uncovered by the ebbing tide.

"What do you think of it?" asked Nip anxiously.

"Well," said Tuck, "when the tide's out we may be able to reach those steps but I don't believe we'll find anything in that cave but sea weed. Anyway

here's nothing to do but to sit down and wait for he tide."

"Oh rubbish!" grumbled Nip.

He was far too excited to sit still and wait. He crambled about the rocks and finally he fell into a ool of water, which made him lose his temper. But ou can't hurry a tide. For one hour they had to vait; one whole hour, no more, no less.

Nip was beside himself with impatience.

"Do you suppose we'll find gold?" he kept saying.

"I don't see what you want with *gold*," answered uck. "You've got everything you need now!"

But at last the tide went out as tides will do f only you give them their time. Nip and Tuck vorked their way along the narrow ledge of rock hich led to the steps. It was hard to get a footing n the seaweed but the iron rings welded into the tone kept them from falling. An occasional wave plashed them with spray.

Nip went ahead. Once his foot slipped on a jelly ish but Tuck saved him. Nip was the first to reach he stairs. Up, up, he climbed, the sea weed and arnacles scrunching under his paws. It was perilous

climbing but at last he reached the goal. He swung himself up the last step and perched on the floor of the cave.

"Find anything?" called Tuck from below.

"I can't make out," answered Nip. "It's dark. Come on up."

The truth was that he was beginning to feel a little nervous. There was no telling what he might find in that cave. The pirates might be at home. He preferred to have someone beside him before he went any further.

So Tuck climbed up the steps and joined Nip. The two of them peered into the blackness of the cave. Back, back into the rock it went. The two animals felt their way carefully. They did not want to tumble down any unexpected holes. Then, as their eyes became used to the dimness, they started exploring in earnest.

At first they found nothing. Then they came on a ship's anchor and a great coil of rope.

"Give me a hand with this rope," said Tuck.

But the rope was so old that it turned to dust in their hands as they touched it.

"Queer thing, that!" exclaimed Nip.

"Must have been here for centuries!" said Tuck. "Wonder where it ever came from! I've never seen an anchor like that before."

As they were examining it carefully, Nip hit his shin against a sharp corner.

"Ouch!" cried Nip. "Look out there!"

"I didn't touch you," said Tuck.

"Well, whatever did is sharp!" muttered Nip as he rubbed his shin.

Tuck felt back into the cave to find what it was. He discovered a great chest bound with iron. Nip had hit against a huge padlock as big as your two fists. Even Tuck became excited.

"Help me get this out to the light!" he called to Nip. "There's a great chest here."

Nip forgot his shin. He forgot everything but the chest.

"Gold! Gold!" cried Nip.

The two of them tugged at the chest. One pull was enough. Out came the chest, but it was so old that with one groan, it fell into a thousand pieces. Its wooden sides fell to dust. Its great iron locks and clamps rattled to the ground. There was nothing left for them to hold together.

Then over the floor of the cave came a shower of gold. The gold pieces rolled in every direction.

"Look out!" shouted Nip. "Catch them! Catch them!"

Nip and Tuck leapt about, stopping as many of the coins as they could. But in spite of all their efforts, some splashed into the water. Some rolled down the cracks in the rock, but they saved as many as possible.

"Well, I never!" gasped Nip as the last coin was stilled and they sat down to rest. "*Well I never!*"

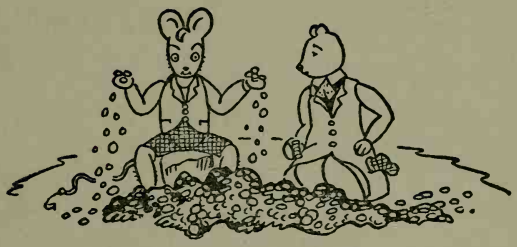
Tuck wiped his brow with his bandana handkerchief. He looked wonderingly at the shining pile before him. But the gold had a different effect on Nip. It had a strange and disturbing effect. Nip ran his paws through the gold. He clinked it and he played with it. A new gleam had come into his eye. Tuck felt uneasy about him.

"We'd better stack it up in piles and see how much there is," said Tuck, who was always practical.

So they fell to and made neat little piles of gold pieces, ten in a pile, the way they do in banks. They tied the packages with seaweed. They could not

nake out from what country the gold had come. It seemed very ancient and the coins were beautifully designed.

But Nip kept stopping in his work. He would toss two or three gold pieces into the air and he would throw back his head and laugh loudly as he watched their gleam. Then he would scowl fiercely and tramp up and down the cave, muttering such



hings as, "Devil and the deep sea! Black Maria! Pieces of eight!" Tuck did not like the way money affected Nip.

At last all the gold was stacked.

"We'll carry home a little of it tonight and come back for the rest later," said Tuck.

He filled his pouch and then started to leave the cave. But he had forgotten the tide! While the two of them had been counting the gold, the tide had

been coming in as silently as the clouds blow across the sky. The rock steps were all under water. There was no way of getting out of the cave until the tide went down and that was six hours off.

"Oh dear!" exclaimed Tuck. "We're caught here for the rest of the day and I never locked up the house."

"Never you mind about the house!" cried Nip with a great wave of his paw. "They may steal the house and everything in it. We have money, money and more money. We can build houses and castles; castles, I say, and skyscrapers!"

"I don't want a castle or a skyscraper," said Tuck firmly. "I want my own little house and I don't want anybody to touch it. But there's nothing to do about it but wait. I'm getting hungry too. We'll be very late for supper. You'd better sit down and rest. You're getting much too excited!"

But Nip would not sit down and rest. He walked back and forth the length of the cave. I might even say he *strutted*. He was a sadly changed Nip. Every now and then he waved his paw aloft as though he were making a speech.

Tuck could stand it no longer.

"I'd like to know what you think you're going to lo with that money!" said Tuck.

"Do with it?" cried Nip. "I shall do everything. shall be powerful. When you have money, you nake more and more money! Money is power."

"Well, power isn't everything!" said Tuck.

"I'd like to know what is?" snapped Nip. He idn't like to have his dreams interrupted. "I shall nvest. That's the thing you do with money. Perhaps 'll build a great summer hotel up here on the shores f the Bay of Fundy. I'll advertise it all over the vorld and I'll probably make a great deal of noney."

"You'll probably lose a great deal of money," ommented Tuck. "You'll spoil this place with a rowd of summer people. I'd like to know where ou'd fish?"

"I shall fish no more," cried Nip. "My fishing ays are o'er. A millionaire doesn't fish except for port. I'll have a weir."

"You'll have indigestion!" said Tuck.

Tuck walked over to the edge of the cave and ooked out. He did wish that the tide would hurry. He wanted to get Nip home and put to bed to calm

him. Nip needed quiet. But you can't hurry a tide.

The afternoon dragged on. Nip thought of more and more plans for spending the money. There was nothing that his fancy did not picture. He would buy a high-power car. They would tour France. He would take up flying. There was no way of life that was expensive that Nip did not consider.

But if you wait long enough even a tide will turn. Out went the tide at last. It was late in the day. The sun was low but the long twilight would last for some hours yet. Finally the ledge of rock was left dry. Tuck and Nip crept down the stairs. At every step the seaweed scrunched beneath their paws and little sea animals scuttled away to safety. It was slippery business. Then they flattened themselves against the cliff and crept along the narrow ledge. Back on dry land again at last, they hastened towards home and supper.

When Nip reached home he suddenly discovered that he was a very tired little animal. It had been a long and exciting day for him. He scarcely waited to eat a fish or two before he yawned and tumbled into bed. Tuck put a hot water bottle on his feet

vhich were cold and wet. Nip gave a grunt and was
oon fast asleep.

Tuck did not sleep. He was tired, very tired; but
e had work still to do. He made himself a cup of
offee and drank it very black. That was to keep
im awake. Then he made ready to go out. He took
large market basket with him. He had made his
lans.

Tuck trotted quickly along the top of the cliff
ack to the cave. He knew that he must work quickly
or the light was failing and the tide would soon be
n again. He scrambled down the rocks and slid
long the slippery ledge. Then up the steps he
limbed and into the cave. He filled his market
asket to the brim with rolls of gold. Then he fast-
ned a long rope to the basket and climbed back up
he cliff with the other end of the rope in his paw.
rrived at a spot on the cliff just over the cave, he
ulled up the basket. He emptied out the gold and
et the basket back down again.

Three times he had to scramble down the cliff
nd climb into the cave to re-fill the basket. The
vaves were just lapping over the ledge as he made
is last trip. He was just in time, for the tide was

fast rising. But with the last basketful of gold on the cliff beside him, Tuck stopped to rest. The gold was all out of the cave. It lay about him in piles.

But Tuck's work was not yet done. Trip after trip he made, carrying the gold down to the home beach. The moon was up and the night was clear. He did not have to hurry any more. He was tired and he stopped often to rest. But, however weary he might be, Tuck was determined to carry out his plan, for he was very much worried by what he had seen during the afternoon. He did not like the effect that money had upon Nip. It was quite clear to him that money was not good for Nip.

When all the gold was safely carried down to the home beach, Tuck rolled out the hat-tub. He filled it full of gold. Then he climbed in himself and pushed off with an oar. It was a quiet night. The tub, though so heavily laden, floated gently on the water. Out into the Bay of Fundy, Tuck paddled the tub with its load of pirates' gold.

When they were well out from shore, Tuck stopped paddling. Then one by one he took the rolls of gold. One by one he dropped them over the side of the tub into the Bay of Fundy. The ripples

widened into larger and larger circles until the next the last roll had vanished.

Tuck held the very last roll in his paw for a moment. Then he opened it and took out one gold piece. He slipped it into his pouch. Then the other nine pieces followed the rest of the treasure.

"I'll buy chocolates for Nip with this," said Tuck to himself. "I couldn't let him come to a bad end on account of all that money. He has no sense about money. It's not good for him. But some chocolates won't hurt him."

With that, Tuck paddled back to shore. He pulled the hat-tub up out of the reach of the waves. Then slowly he climbed up to his little house, filled his hot water bag and went to bed.

The northern lights flamed across the sky. The tide came in and the tide went out, and Nip and Tuck slept peacefully in their beds in the little house beside the Bay of Fundy.